

LEADING
No. 5
WINTER
ISSUE

FIVE FAVORITE FEATURES!



Leading COMICS

10¢



VIGILANTE
GREEN ARROW
STAR-SPANGLED KID
SHINING KNIGHT
AND CRIMSON AVENGER

ALL GO TO TOWN
TOGETHER IN A
FAST FULL-LENGTH
ADVENTURE AGAINST
AS WILY A RASCAL
AS EVER GAVE SEVEN
HEROES A TUSSLE IN
THE STORY OF

**"THE MIRACLES THAT
MONEY COULDN'T BUY"**

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SALUTE

By G. W. Anderson



"Some day I hope to own a real race horse," said Peter as he cleaned one of the work horses on his father's farm. And that is just what happened.

Peter heard the grown people talking about the great horses that would run in the races at Saratoga. How he longed to go there and see them for himself! Perhaps he did a lot of chores around the place that morning his father might take him along to the big races. And sure enough! His father did ask him to go along.

At the races a wonderful thing happened to Peter. Mohawk, an old race horse, had gone lame, and somehow Peter managed to get him for himself. Peter was so happy he could hardly speak.

Home again, with a race horse of his own, Peter was about trying to heal Mohawk's lame leg. Would his horse ever be able to race again? And how would Peter finally one day, come to own a grandson of the great Man-O-War?

You will find all the answers in this interesting book. It has beautiful pictures of horses, too.

This review of Salute was written by Jackie Caudell, of Greenville, S. C., and was selected as the winner of the \$5.00 award. A check has been sent to Jackie. Other fine reviews were written by:

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SUPERMAN'S SECRET MESSAGE

(Code Krypton No. 9)

WXF RB CQN CRVN OXA NENAH KXH CX
CQN JRM XO QRB LXDWCAH KH KDHRWP
JWM KXWMB!



POSSESSED OF COLD, RUTHLESS, CALCULATING POWER...DRIVEN BY A DIABOLICALLY CUNNING, SCHEMING BRAIN THAT SCOFFS AT JUSTICE AND TOYS WITH MURDER...MOVING WITH A MASTERY OVER MEN AND MONEY UNMATCHED BY ANY OTHER MORTAL...SUCH IS THE MAN KNOWN AND FEARED AS THE SKULL! AND THE SEVEN SOLDIERS OF VICTORY, ENMESHED IN A MAZE OF DARK AND DANGEROUS DESIGN, FIND THEMSELVES BATTLING FOR THEIR LIVES AS THEY PIT THEIR MAGIC SKILL AND MATCHLESS COURAGE AGAINST THE FOUL AND FELONIOUS PLANS OF THE WEALTHIEST MAN IN THE WORLD IN HIS QUEST FOR

"THE MIRACLES THAT MONEY COULDN'T BUY!"

IN THE OFFICE OF THE **GLOBE-LEADER**, **LEE TRAVIS**, BETTER KNOWN IN HIS GUISE OF THE **CRIMSON AVENGER**, WAITS IMPATIENTLY FOR THE JANGLING OF A DISTANT BELL...

OPERATOR, I'VE BEEN TRYING FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES TO GET THE STATE PRISON! I WANT TO SPEAK TO THE WARDEN!

I'M SORRY, SIR, THE LINE IS DEAD! SOMETHING IS WRONG AT THE PRISON!

SOMETHING WRONG! AND **PORKY JOHNSON'S** EXECUTION IS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY! HE ALWAYS THREATENED TO ESCAPE... I WONDER...?

THERE'S A PHONE CALL, SIR, FROM A MAN WHO SAYS HE'S THE **CRIMSON AVENGER**! IT'S URGENT!

IT MUST BE, OR THE **AVENGER** WOULDN'T BOTHER TO CALL ME AT SUCH A TIME!

A SWIFT TWIRL OF THE TELEPHONE DIAL AND IN ANOTHER PART OF THE VAST METROPOLIS...

IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE TO ADDRESS YOU, GENTLEMEN, AND SPEAK OF MY EXPERIENCES IN FIGHTING CRIME! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

MR. **GREEN ARROW**...

LATER... THE **ARROWPLANE**, FASTEST THING ON WHEELS, WITH A CARGO OF CRIME-CHASERS, SPEEDS TOWARD THE STATE PRISON...

PORKY JOHNSON COMMITTED MANY MURDERS, AND YOU, **GREEN ARROW**, BROUGHT HIM TO JUSTICE! THAT'S WHY I GOT IN TOUCH WITH YOU!

MEANWHILE... DEATH HOVERS OVER THE GRIM GRAY WALLS OF THE PENITENTIARY...

ARE THEY GOING TO BE SURPRISED WHEN THESE BOMBS LAND!

NEVER MIND THE CHATTER! FOLLOW THE SKULL'S ORDERS AND PULL THE LEVER!

WE'LL BE AT THE PRISON IN FIFTEEN MINUTES! I HOPE WE'RE NOT TOO LATE!

THEY DON'T STAND A CHANCE!

DOZENS OF INCENDIARY BOMBS BURST INTO FLAMES OVER THE PRISON BUILDINGS...

WHILE, UNNOTICED IN THE CONFUSION, BILL JOHNSON CLIMBS ONE OF THE TOWERING STONE WALLS ----

THEY THOUGHT THEY'D HANG ME TODAY, BUT THE SKULL SAID THEY WOULDN'T ... AND HE KEPT HIS PROMISE!

IF I JUMP DOWN OUTSIDE, THEY'LL TRAIL ME WITH BLOODHOUNDS, AND CAPTURE ME AGAIN... AH, THAT LADDER!

I WONDER WHY THE SKULL IS DOING ALL THIS FOR ME? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO HE IS!

BUT AS THE ESCAPING CONVICT CLAMBERS TOWARD FREEDOM, THE TRIO OF LEGIONNAIRES ARRIVES ON THE SCENE ----

SEEMS LIKE WE'RE TOO LATE, GREEN ARROW!

WE'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE TO GET HIM! ALL SET FOR THE CATAPULT, SPEEDY!

THE TOUCH OF A TRIGGER... AND THE WIZARD ARCHER SAILS THROUGH THE AIR WITH THE SPEED OF ONE OF HIS OWN ARROWS!

I HOPE SPEEDY'S AIM WAS GOOD... IT'LL BE TOO BAD IF I MISS THAT LADDER!

JUST MADE IT! AND NOW TO SPOIL JOHNSON'S ESCAPE!

HEY, WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

YOU PUT YOUR FOOT IN IT WHEN YOU BUTTED IN THIS TIME, GREEN ARROW!

UGH... MY HEAD'S GOING IN CIRCLES ... I'VE GOT TO HOLD ON...

AS THE DAZED ARCHER STRUGGLES TO RETAIN HIS GRIP, HIS CRIMINAL FOE CLIMBS TO SAFETY...AND THEN...

SO LONG, GREEN ARROW! YOU'VE GOT A LONG TRIP AHEAD OF YOU DOWN TO EARTH!

MY HEADS CLEARING... BUT JOHNSON IS IN THE PLANE...AND THE PILOT'S GOING TO CUT THE LADDER!

STRAIGHT THROUGH ONE OF THE PLANE WINGS WHIZZES THE STEEL BARB... AND THE MASTER BOWMAN'S SUDDEN DESCENT IS CHECKED!

NOW TO CLIMB UP AGAIN TOWARD THE PLANE...

WE'LL SWING HIM AGAINST ONE OF THOSE TREES ON THE END OF HIS OWN ARROWLINE!

HMM... WONDER WHY THE PLANE IS FLYING SO LOW?

I'VE GOT TO ACT FAST...WHILE I'M STILL IN THE AIR...

I'LL BE ABLE TO HANG ON BY THIS ARROWLINE... IF IT HITS RIGHT!

BUT UP ABOVE, IN THE COCKPIT...

HE'S STILL TRYING TO GET ME! WE'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF HIM SOMEHOW!

WE'RE PASSING OVER A FOREST... I'VE GOT AN IDEA...

I GET IT! THEY'RE TRYING TO GET RID OF ME! I'LL HAVE TO TIME THIS JUST RIGHT!



HE GOT AWAY!

NEVER MIND HIM! MY ORDERS ARE TO DELIVER YOU TO THE SKULL!

JUST MADE IT!



THE SKULL SURE KNOWS HOW TO PICK A POISON GAS THAT WORKS!

THE SKULL HAD THIS TUNNEL DUG FOR ME, AND I MYSELF DIDN'T KNOW IT UNTIL NOW! HE'S SURE A SLICK CUSTOMER! WONDER WHO HE IS?

SOON... ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, A SERIES OF SENSATIONAL ESCAPES BRINGS FREEDOM TO VICIOUS CRIMINALS, AND BAFFLING HEADACHES TO THE POLICE!



HE'S GOT A GUN
AHHH...

THESE BULLETS ARE A PRESENT FROM THE SKULL!

GREIDER, THIS IS AN ORDER TO HAVE YOU TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER PRISON! YOU'LL GO WITH THIS OFFICER!

HE DON'T KNOW THE ORDER WAS FORGED! THIS FAKE COP IS ONE OF THE SKULL'S MEN!



FIRST PORKY JOHNSON GOT AWAY, AND NOW BULL CORBIN, WHO WAS SENTENCED TO SOLITARY IMPRISONMENT FOR LIFE! I WONDER IF THE SAME MAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BOTH ESCAPES?

WE CAUGHT SPARKLER AND HAD HIM CONVICTED!

AND NOW HE'S FREE AGAIN! WE'LL HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR DIRTY WORK!

SO THAT RATTLER, BRONCO SLADE, SHOT HIS WAY OUT! WELL, I'LL JUST HAVE TO ROUND HIM UP AGAIN!

THAT BASE VARLET, GREIDER, HAS ONCE MORE ELUDED THE MINIONS OF JUSTICE! I MUST CALL HIM TO ACCOUNT ONCE MORE!



MEANWHILE... IN A DOMAIN WORTHY OF AN ORIENTAL MONARCH RISES A TOWERING CASTLE CONSTRUCTED WITH MATCHLESS SPLENDOR...



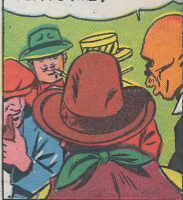
MASTER OF ITS WONDROUS WEALTH IS NONE OTHER THAN... THE SKULL!

YOU GENTLEMEN ARE WONDERING WHY I HAD YOU RELEASED FROM JAIL!



WE FIGURE YOU'RE THE BOSS OF A BIG SHOT CRIME OUTFIT!

NO, GENTLEMEN, I'M NOT A PROFESSIONAL CRIMINAL! I AM A WEALTHY MAN, WEALTHY BEYOND DREAMS! BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS MY MONEY CAN'T BUY! YOU SHALL GET THEM FOR ME!



YOU, SLADE, ARE AN EXPERT WITH HORSES! I WANT YOU TO STEAL SPINAWAY, THE WORLD'S FASTEST RACER, WHICH HIS OWNER REFUSED TO SELL TO ME AT ANY PRICE!



YOU SAVED ME FROM BEING SHOT BY A FIRING SQUAD, SKULL! I'LL GET THAT HORSE FOR YOU!

SPARKLER, YOU KNOW GEMS! YOU MUST GET FOR ME THE FAMOUS KORAM DIAMOND, WHICH I COULDN'T BUY FOR A MILLION DOLLARS!



SKULL, IF NOT FOR YOU, I'D BE DEAD IN A LETHAL CHAMBER RIGHT NOW! THAT DIAMOND IS AS GOOD AS IN YOUR POCKET!

CORBIN, IT'S UP TO YOU TO STEAL THE ROCKET SHIP WHICH AN INVENTOR IS BUILDING IN KENTUCKY! WITH THAT I SHALL BE ABLE TO TAKE A PLEASURE TRIP TO THE MOON!



I'LL FOLLOW ORDERS, SKULL!

GREIDER, YOU'VE GOT A HARDER JOB THAN THE OTHERS! I WANT YOU TO STEAL THE SHINING KNIGHT'S BULLETPROOF COAT OF MAIL! THEN I'LL NO LONGER BE AFRAID OF BEING SHOT IN THE BACK BY SOME TRAITOR!



I'LL DO THAT, SKULL! IT'S THE KNIGHT'S FAULT! I WAS CAUGHT AND SENTENCED TO BE ELECTROCUTED!

AS FOR YOU, JOHNSON, YOUR JOB IS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT! I WANT YOU TO SECURE A MACHINE WHOSE RAYS BRING ABOUT PERPETUAL YOUTH! I'M GETTING TO BE AN OLD MAN, AND I'M AFRAID OF DYING!



YES, GENTLEMEN, I, WHO AM THE WEALTHIEST MAN IN THE WORLD, WANT THESE MIRACLES THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY! YOUR QUESTS MUST BE SUCCESSFUL! NOW BE OFF... AND GOOD LUCK!



JUST TELL ME WHERE IT IS, SKULL, AND IT'S YOURS!

GOOD LUCK TO THE SKULL'S MEN MEANS AN EVIL DESTINY FOR LAW-ABIDING MANKIND! IS THE SKULL, AS HE THINKS, REALLY ABOVE THE LAW? DOES HIS GIANT WEALTH GIVE HIM THE POWER TO FLOUT THE RULES WHICH ORDINARY MORTALS MUST OBEY? HAVE THE

SEVEN SOLDIERS OF VICTORY
FINALLY MET THEIR NEMESIS?
WE SHALL SEE!

The VIGILANTE

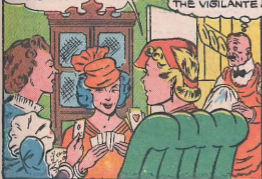
CHAPTER 2



IN THE HOME OF ROSCOE MEEK, THREE WOMEN PLAY BRIDGE, WHILE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SULK IN THE KITCHEN...

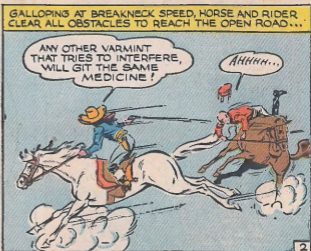
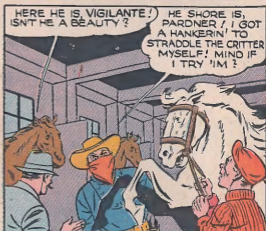
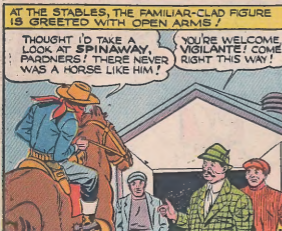
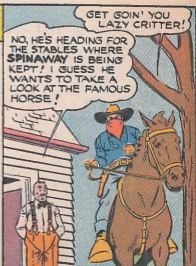
IT'S WONDERFUL HOW YOU CONTROL YOUR HUSBAND, MRS. MEEK! HE DOES EVERYTHING YOU SAY!

SHUCKS, I WISH I HAD THE NERVE TO TALK BACK TO HER! IF I WAS ONLY LIKE THE VIGILANTE!



FIRST OF THE SINISTER SKULL'S HENCHMEN TO STRIKE, BRONCO SLADE IS QUICK TO SCORE WITH SAVAGE SUCCESS! DEVSING A DIABOLICAL DOUBLE-EDGED SCHEME, HE ENTANGLES THE VIGILANTE IN ITS VILE MESHES...AND DEATH STARES THE WARRIOR OF THE PLAINS IN THE FACE, AS THE DARING DESPERADO COMBINES THEFT AND MURDER TO PERPLEX THE POLICE, AND UNLEASH THE LAW AGAINST ITS OWN ENFORCER IN

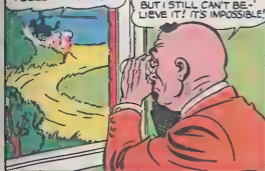
"THE CASE OF THE CRIMINAL VIGILANTE!"



WHILE NEARBY, AN ASTOUNDED HERO-WORSHIPPER STANDS AGAPE!

THAT TAKES CARE OF THE LAST ONE! THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO FOLLOW ME NOW!

THE VIGILANTE-A MURDERER AND THIEF! I'VE SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES, BUT I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!



I'LL BET IT'S A THIEF DISGUISED AS HIM! MAYBE IT'S BRONCO SLADE! HE ALWAYS STOLE HORSES!

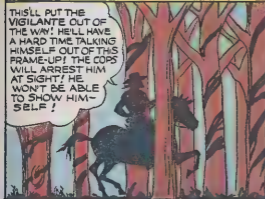


I'LL FOLLOW, AND MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO CAPTURE HIM AND COLLECT THAT REWARD! GOLLY, WON'T MY WIFE BE SURPRISED!



MEANWHILE, DEEMING HIMSELF SAFE FROM PURSUIT, BRONCO SLADE - WHO IS INDEED THE SPURIOUS VIGILANTE - HEADS FOR A PREPARED HIDEAWAY...

THIS'LL PUT THE VIGILANTE OUT OF THE WAY! HE'LL HAVE A HARD TIME TALKING HIMSELF OUT OF THIS FRAME-UP! THE COPS WILL ARREST HIM AT SIGHT! HE WON'T BE ABLE TO SHOW HIMSELF!



BUT IN A LOCAL THEATRE, WHERE GREG SANDERS, THE PRAIRIE TROUBADOUR, IS MAKING A PERSONAL APPEARANCE...

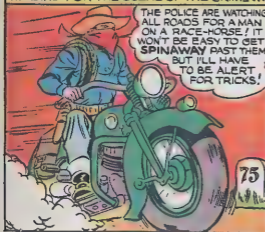
THE VIGILANTE KILLED THREE MEN AND RODE OFF ON SPINAWAY!

SOME SIDEWINDER HAS DISGUISED HIMSELF AS ME AND COMMITTED MURDER! I'LL HAVE TO ACT FAST IF I DON'T WANT HIM TO GET AWAY WITH IT!



HEADING FOR THE SCENE OF THE CRIME...

THE POLICE ARE WATCHING ALL ROADS FOR A MAN ON A RACE-HORSE! IT WON'T BE EASY TO GET SPINAWAY PAST THEM! BUT I'LL HAVE TO BE ALERT FOR TRICKS!



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CRIME-BUSTING CAREER, THE WARRIOR OF THE PLAINS FINDS HIMSELF IN CONFLICT WITH LAW AND ORDER!

STOP!

SORRY BOYS, I HAVEN'T GOT TIME TO EXPLAIN! I'LL BE BACK AFTER I TRAP A SNEAKIN' COYOTE!





BETTER STOP, VIGILANTE, OR WE'LL SHOOT!

I'VE TAKEN MY CHANCES WITH BULLETS BEFORE AND I'LL TAKE 'EM AGAIN! HOLD ON TO YOUR SEATS, BOYS! YOU'RE GOIN' FOR A REAL RIDE!

UP A STEEP, ALMOST IMPASSABLE TRAIL, THE WESTERN WADDY LEADS THE WAY!

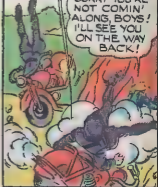
G-CAN'T AIM S-STRAIGHT W-WITH ALL THIS B-B-BOUNCING!

THIS MACHINE BUCKS BETTER THAN A WILD MUSTANG! I COULD RIDE IT IN A RODEO!

THIS HILL IS TOO STEEP FOR ME!

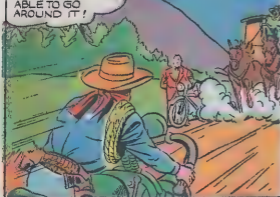
EVEN A WILD GOAT WOULD HAVE TROUBLE CLIMBING IT! HOW DOES HE DO IT?

SORRY YOU'RE NOT COMIN' ALONG, BOYS! I'LL SEE YOU ON THE WAY BACK!



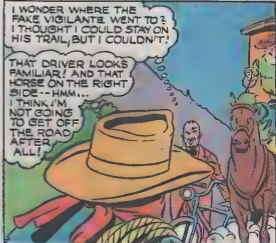
OVER THE RISE OF THE HILL RACES THE VIGILANTE! AND THEN, FAR AHEAD...

THAT WAGON IS BLOCKING THE ROAD! BUT I'LL BE ABLE TO GO AROUND IT!



I WONDER WHERE THE FAKE VIGILANTE WENT TO? I THOUGHT I COULD STAY ON HIS TRAIL, BUT I COULDN'T!

THAT DRIVER LOOKS FAMILIAR! AND THAT HORSE ON THE RIGHT SIDE--HMM... I THINK I'M NOT GOING TO GET OFF THE ROAD AFTER ALL!



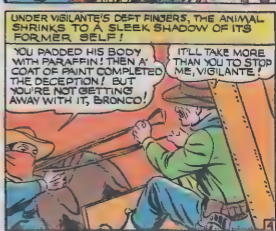
IT'S VIGILANTE!

AND YOU'RE BRONCO SLADE! KNOWING THAT THE POLICE WOULD BE LOOKING FOR A THOROUGHBRED, YOU DISGUISED SPINAWAY TO LOOK LIKE A TRUCK HORSE!

UNDER VIGILANTE'S DEFT FINGERS, THE ANIMAL SHRINKS TO A SLEEK SHADOW OF ITS FORMER SELF!

YOU PADDED HIS BODY WITH PARAFFIN! THEN A COAT OF PAINT COMPLETED THE DECEPTION! BUT YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY WITH IT, BRONCO!

IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN YOU TO STOP ME, VIGILANTE!





A COUPLE OF LEAD SLUGS IN YUH...

I EXPECTED YOU TO GO IN FOR GUN-PLAY, BRONCO! YOU'RE GOIN' TO GET A FEW SLUGS IN RETURN!



UGH...

THAT'LL BRING YOU DOWN TO EARTH!



YOU THINK YOU'RE A WILD HORSE, BRONCO! HOW DO YOU LIKE BEING SADDLED?

IT DON'T PAY TO TRY TO RIDE ME, VIGILANTE!

THE VICIOUS DESPERADO CLUTCHES AT THE VALIANT VIGILANTE WITH ARMS THAT HAVE THE STRENGTH OF STEEL CABLES!



YOU'RE NOT SENDIN' ME BACK TO JAIL TO BE SHOT!

YOU'RE A TOUGH HOMBRE SLADE. I'LL HAVE TO SOFTEN YOU UP!

I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! I CAN'T HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER!



ONE MORE GOOD SOCK AND HE'S DONE FOR!

SUDDENLY, A MEEK LITTLE FIGURE DECIDES TO LEND A HAND...



THE VIGILANTE HAS BEEN FIGHTING A MURDERER, WHILE I'VE STOOD BY IDLY! I'VE GOT TO HELP HIM!



AHHHH...

OHhhh / I DIDN'T MEAN...

THANKS, STRANGER! THAT TAKES CARE OF VIGILANTE!

POOR ROSCOE MEEK RECEIVES A REWARD HE DID NOT EXPECT!

THIS WILL LEARN YUH NOT TO TANGLE WITH TROUBLE!

AHHHH...

I'LL LEAVE THE VIGILANTE HERE, WHERE THE POLICE WILL BE ABLE TO PICK HIM UP!

MEANWHILE, I'LL DELIVER SPINAWAY TO THE SKULL AND PAY OFF MY DEBT TO HIM!

MOMENTS LATER...

I DIDN'T KNOW SLADE COULD HIT AS HARD AS THAT!

IT WAS I WHO HIT YOU, VIGILANTE, BY MISTAKE! I'M SORRY! I WAS TRYING TO HELP YOU!

NEVER MIND, FRIEND, LET BYGONES BE BYGONES! WE'LL CATCH THAT SIDEWINDER YET!

SOON THE WESTERN WHIRLWIND AND HIS NEWFOUND FRIEND ARE HOT ON THE TRAIL ONCE MORE!

THIS CAVUSE ON WHEELS WILL GO FASTER THAN ANY HOSSFLESH! HOLD ON TIGHT, FRIEND!

I N-NEVER R-RODE ONE OF THESE B-BEFORE! D-DON'T G-GO T-TOO F-FAST, V-VIGILANTE!

IT'S NICE OF YOU TO SAY THAT, VIGILANTE! WHEN I DO SOMETHING WRONG AT HOME, MY WIFE WILL NEVER LET ME FORGET IT!

STILL WITH ME, PARDNER? Y-YES, V-VIGILANTE! IF M-MY W-WIFE COULD ONLY S-SEE M-ME, N-NOW!

NO DOUBT ABOUT BRONCO SLADE COMING THIS WAY! HE KILLED THESE POLICEMEN! BUT WE'RE GOING TO PUT AN END TO HIS CAREER!

W-WHAT W-WILL H-HE, D-D-O T-T-O US W-WHEN W-WE C-CATCH H-HIM, V-VIGILANTE?

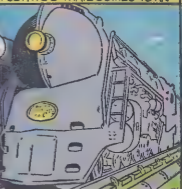
A MAN ON A HORSE. RODE
THAT WAY, VIGILANTE!
TOWARD THE RAILROAD!

THANKS, SON! YOU'RE
A LAD THAT KEEPS
HIS EYES OPEN!

BUT AT THE RAILROAD, THE FUGITIVE'S TRAIL COMES TO AN
ABRUPT END...

THE ONLY PLACE SLADE
COULD HIDE THAT HORSE
WOULD BE A FREIGHT CAR!
BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE TRAIN
IN SIGHT...AND THAT'S
FOR PASSENGERS!

BUT PRIZE
RACE
HORSES
SOME-
TIMES
HAVE
PRIVATE
CARS!



YOU'RE RIGHT, PARDNER!
I'M GOIN' TO HAVE A
LOOK AT THAT TRAIN
BEFORE IT STARTS!



BUT THE OVER-CONFIDENT
CRIMINALS COUNT THEIR
CHICKENS TOO SOON...

IT'S THE FIGHTIN'
COWPUNCHER
AGAIN!

YOU'RE SEEING
RIGHT, BRONCO -
BUT YOU WON'T BE
WHEN I GET THROUGH
WITH YOU!



WHILE IN A LUXURIOUS PRIVATE
CAR...

I GOT SPINAWAY TO
YOU ALL RIGHT,
SKULL! NOW WE'RE
QUITS!

YOU HAVE DONE
YOUR JOB WELL!
IF THE OTHERS
CARRY OUT MY
ORDERS AS YOU
HAVE, I SHALL
HAVE EVERYTHING
I DESIRE!



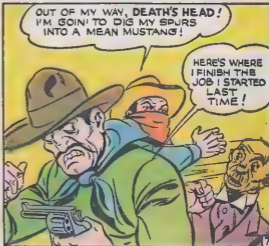
WHAT I DON'T GET, SKULL
IS WHY I WASN'T TRAILED
HERE BY THE COPS!
THE MEN WORKING ON
THIS TRAIN SAW ME RIDE
IN HERE ON SPINAWAY!

AH, SLADE, YOU HAVE NO
IDEA OF THE POWER OF
WEALTH! THIS IS MY
PRIVATE TRAIN! WHILE
YOU ARE HERE, YOU ARE
IN NO DANGER!



OUT OF MY WAY, DEATH'S HEAD!
I'M GOIN' TO DIG MY SPURS
INTO A MEAN MUSTANG!

HERE'S WHERE
I FINISH THE
JOB I STARTED
LAST TIME!



FLAILING FISTS POUND A FIERCE TAT-TOO AGAINST THE OUTLAW'S FACE...

YOU'RE SLOW ON THE DRAW, BRONCO! BULLETS CAN'T HURT ME SO LONG AS THEY'RE IN YOUR GUN!

YOU'RE CROWIN' TOO SOON, VIGILANTE!

YOU'RE FORGETTIN' THAT A BRONCO HAS A POWERFUL KICK!

UGGH!

WHILE THE FURIOUS COMBAT RAGES, TIMID MR. MECK TACKLES THE TERRIFYING SKULL!

I'M SCARED, BUT I HAVE TO ACT BRAVE. LIKE VIGILANTE! IF MY WIFE COULD ONLY SEE ME NOW!

YOU INSIGNIFICANT RUNT, HOW DARE... UGH!

I KNOCKED HIM OUT! I MUST BE STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT!

TAKE THAT, VIGILANTE!

CRACK!

AS LITTLE MR. MECK'S EYES FEVERISHLY SEARCH THE SKULL'S LUXURIOUS CAR...

THAT DOES IT! AFTER THAT PUNCH, BRONCO, YOU'RE GOING TO BE MIGHTY TAME!

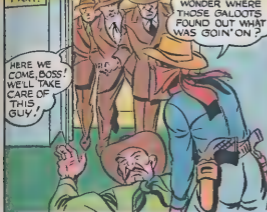
RRRRRING!

AHHHH...

I'VE GOT TO HELP VIGILANTE! BUT LAST TIME I TRIED IT, I HURT HIM! MAYBE I BETTER NOT INTERFERE!

I HAVE IT! I'LL PULL THIS CORD AND BRING HELP!

SUMMONED BY THE CLANGOR OF THE ALARM, THE SKULL'S HENCHMEN RACE TO JOIN THE FRAY!



HERE WE COME, BOSS! WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS GUY!

WONDER WHERE THOSE GALLOOTS FOUND OUT WHAT WAS GOIN' ON?

WHILE POOR MR. MEEK STARES IN DISMAY...



INSTEAD OF HELPING, I'VE SPOILED THINGS AGAIN! THE VIGILANTE WILL NEVER FORGIVE ME!

HERE'S A BLACK EYE TO MATCH YOUR MASK!

THE VIGILANTE FIGHTS VALIANTLY...

PUNCHIN' COWS AIN'T HALF AS MUCH FUN AS PUNCHIN' COWARDS!



OW!

WHY DID I EVER TANGLE WITH THIS GUY?



BUT FINALLY SUPERIOR NUMBERS OVERWHELM THE WILDCAT WARRIOR...

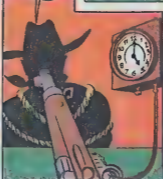
HE SURE GAVE US A TOUGH FIGHT!

BUT HE WON'T FIGHT NO MORE! TIE HIM UP, BOYS. I GOT A LITTLE PLAN FOR MR. VIGILANTE!



SO YOU THOUGHT YOU'D TURN ME OVER TO THE LAW AND HAVE ME SHOT? BUT IT'S YOU WHO'S GOIN' TO BE SHOT, VIGILANTE! WE'RE UNCOUPLIN' THIS CAR, AND LEAVIN' IT BEHIND...

LOOKS LIKE THE END OF THE TRAIL FOR ME!



IS THIS REALLY THE END OF THE VIGILANTE'S CRIME-FIGHTING CAREER? THE WESTERN WADY'S FUTURE LOOKS BLACK... BUT NO! BLACKER THAN THAT OF THE OTHER SOLDIERS OF VICTORY! FOR THIS TIME FATE SEEMS TO HAVE DESERTED THE SEVEN LEGIONNAIRES... AND TROUBLE APLENTY LOOMS AHEAD IN THEIR STRUGGLE WITH THE SKULL'S MINIONS! AS THE VIGILANTE FIGHTS FOR LIFE, LET'S FOLLOW THE STAR-SPANGLED KID AND STRIPESY IN AN EPISODE OF EVIL!

the STAR-SPANGLED KID

CHAPTER III

SECOND OF THE SKULL'S SINISTER COMPANIONS IN CRIME IS SPARKLER, CONNOISSEUR OF COSTLY GEMS AND CUNNING MURDERS. HIS SKILLFUL SNARE ENTANGLES TWO OF THE SEVEN SOLDIERS OF VICTORY IN A WEB OF LURKING DEATH. AND IT IS DEATH THAT STANDS GRINNING ONCE MORE AT THE END OF A DANGEROUS TRAIL TO FULFILL A DESTINY ITS DELUDED VICTIM HAD SOUGHT DESPERATELY TO ESCAPE IN HIS SEARCH FOR THE **DIAMOND OF DOOM!**



IN THE MAGNIFICENT PEMBERTON VANSION, A YOUNG SCION OF WEALTH ENDURES A BORING LECTURE

SYLVESTER, YOUR LOAFING DAYS ARE AT AN END. FROM NOW ON, YOU'RE EARNING YOUR OWN LIVING

REALLY, DAD, I NEVER LOAF! I KEEP VERY BUSY RAISING TROPICAL FISH!

TROPICAL FISH... BAH! YOU'RE GOING TO GET A JOB THAT PAYS WAGES! HERE ARE THE CLASSIFIED ADS!



PICK OUT ANY JOB YOU WANT, AND GET IT! BUT FROM NOW ON, YOU RECEIVE NO ALLOWANCE FROM ME! YOU EITHER WORK OR STARVE!

YOU'RE VERY TIRESOME, FATHER! YOU REALIZE PERFECTLY WELL THAT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO WORK!

BUT AS SYLVESTER'S EYES SCAN THE CLASSIFIED COLUMNS...

HMM SOUNDS AS IF SOMEONE WANTS TO SEE ME AND STRIPESY! WE'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL! IT MAY BE A TRAP!!

UPON SECOND THOUGHT, FATHER, I BELIEVE YOU MAY BE RIGHT! I'LL HAVE DUGAN DRIVE ME OVER TO APPLY FOR A POSITION AT ONCE!

GOOD FOR YOU, SYLVESTER! WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU EXPECT TO DO??

ER—LABORATORY WORK, FATHER! I'D LIKE TO HUNT FOR ESCAPED RATS!

THAT EVENING...THE LUXURIOUS PEMBERTON LIMOUSINE SLIPS AT A LEISURELY PACE THROUGH NARROW STREETS...

TIME TO PULL A SWITCHEROO, KID!

A DOUBLE SWITCHEROO PAT! LET HER RIP!!

STRIPESY TOUCHES A BUTTON...SECTIONS OF THE CAR WHIRL AND TURN, AND...THE STAID LIMOUSINE HAS BECOME THE **STAR-ROCKET RACER**! BUT **INSIDE...**

HOW DO I LOOK, KID??

PERFECT, PAT! I FEEL LIKE PUTTING A NICKEL IN YOUR TIN CUP!! I HOPE THEY DON'T RECOGNIZE US THROUGH THESE DISGUISES!!

NOT MANY MOMENTS LATER...

THIS IS THE PLACE, KID!!

I HOPE WE GET A LOOK AT THEM BEFORE THEY SPOT ANYTHING IS WRONG! RING THE DOORBELL, PAT!!

THE DOOR SWINGS SLOWLY BACK...

COULD YOU PLEASE HELP
THE BLIND, SIR?

CERTAINLY!
COME RIGHT
IN!

HE LOOKS
HARMLESS
ENOUGH!



IF YOU WAIT HERE A MOMENT
I'LL GET YOU SOME MONEY!

THANK YOU,
SIR!

THAT OLD MAN
IS BEGINNING
TO LOOK
FAMILIAR!



WITH STARTLING SUDDENNESS, A
REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATION
TAKES PLACE.

SURE, KID, IT'S ME! I'VE BEEN
EXPECTING YOU! THOSE DIS-
GUISES DIDN'T FOOL ME - I
HAD ONE ON MYSELF!

SPARKLER!



I GOT A JOB TO PULL OFF FOR THE
SKULL, AND I KNEW I WOULDN'T BE
ABLE TO DO IT WHILE YOU TWO WERE
AROUND! SO I DECIDED TO PUT YOU
OUT OF THE WAY!



AS THE CUNNING CRIMINAL STEPS BACK...

KID, WE'VE PLAYED THE
SPARKLER'S GAME LONG
ENOUGH! LET'S SHOW HIM
ONE OF OUR TRICK PLAYS!
23 X Z !!

NO, STRIPESY, THOSE
TOMMY-GUNS WOULD
CHOP US DOWN IN
NO TIME!



SAY THE WORD, SPARKLER, AND I'LL DRILL
YOUR INITIALS IN 'EM WITH LEO SLUGS !!

NO, I'VE GOT A BETTER
IDEA! THEY'RE GOING TO
DIE THE WAY I WAS TO
BE EXECUTED... IN A
LETHAL CHAMBER



THE GALLANT DUO ARE FORCED TO ENTER
A LARGE STEEL-BARRED CASE!

THIS ROOM IS GOING
TO BE SEALED SO THAT
NO FRESH AIR CAN GET
IN! THE CANDLES WILL
BURN UP THE OXYGEN...
AND YOU'LL CHOKE TO
DEATH !!

LET ME GET MY
HANDS ON YOU...
AND WE'LL SEE
WHO DOES THE
CHOKING!



WHEN I WAS KID, I USED TO KILL MICE THE SAME WAY... PUT 'EM UNDER A GLASS JAR AND LIGHT A CANDLE! SO LONG... RATS!



AS THE CANDLES BURN, FOUL CHOKING AIR FILLS THE STUFFY ROOM!

NO WAY OF BLOWING THOSE THINGS OUT, STRIPESY! IF WE EXPECT TO LAST ANY LONGER, IT'LL HAVE TO BE WITHOUT BREATHING!

YEAH---AND JUST WHEN WE GOT A LEAD! TAKE A LOOK AT THIS PAPER! I PICKED OUT OF SPARKLER'S POCKET WHILE HE WAS NEAR THE BARS AND I WAS SEARCHING FOR A KEY!



IT'S A MAP OF THE KIMBERLY MANSION! AND MRS. KIMBERLEY OWNS THE FAMOUS KORAM DIAMOND THAT LEAVES A TRAIL OF DEATH BEHIND IT!

THAT'S WHAT HE'S GOTTA DO FOR THE SKULL, HUH? WE COULD STOP HIM IF WE COULD GET OUTA HERE! THINK, KID, THINK!



THE STAR-SPANGLED KID'S BRAIN STARTS CLICKING, AND...

GOOD BOY! SPARKLER FORGOT THAT WE COULD MOVE THIS THING AROUND FROM THE INSIDE!

WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THAT WINDOW! A LITTLE MORE ACTION!



AH, FRESH AIR! IT SMELLS FUNNY!

YOU'LL GET USED TO IT AFTER A WHILE, KID! BUT HOW DO WE GET OUT OF HERE NOW?



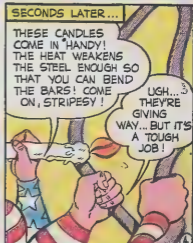
IF WE CAN TURN THIS CAGE OVER AGAIN TOWARD THOSE CANDLES, WE CAN DO THE TRICK!



SECONDS LATER...

THESE CANDLES COME IN 'HANDY! THE HEAT WEAKENS THE STEEL ENOUGH SO THAT YOU CAN BEND THE BARS! COME ON, STRIPESY!

UGH...³ THEY'RE GIVING WAY... BUT IT'S A TOUGH JOB!



SLIPPING THROUGH THE BARS,
THE ALL-AMERICAN DUO SPEEDS
FOR THE KIMBERLY MANSION!

KID, HERE'S WHERE
WE PLAY A RETURN
ENGAGEMENT WITH
SPARKLER! I'M GONNA
MAKE HIM SEE PIN
WHEELS IN FRONT
OF HIS EYES!

HOW'S HE
GOING TO STEAL
THAT DIAMOND,
THOUGH MRS. KIM-
BERLY IS HAVING
A PARTY TONIGHT,
AND THE PLACE IS
FULL OF GUARDS?
I'M GOING AS A
GUEST! SWITCHEROO!

THE STAR-ROCKET RACER BECOMES A STALD
LIMOUSINE ONCE MORE! AND SOON...

SYLVESTER, DEAR,
YOU SAID YOU WEREN'T
COMING! I'M SO GLAD
YOU CHANGED YOUR
MIND!

OH, I THOUGHT I
MIGHT GET A
CHANGE OF AT-
MOSPHERE,
MRS. KIMBERLY!
(WONDER WHEN
AND HOW SPARKLER
IS GOING TO SHOW UP?)

THE YOUNG SCION OF WEALTH PRE-
TENDS TO TAKE PART IN THE
FESTIVITIES!

YOU MUST ADMIRE
MRS. KIMBERLY VERY
MUCH, SYLVESTER!
YOU HARDLY EVER
TAKE YOUR
EYES OFF
HER!

ER-YES-I
THINK SHE'S
VERY BRIGHT!
SHE POSITIVELY
GLITTERS!!(SHE'S
NOT WEARING
THE FATAL
KORAM DIAMOND!
IT MUST BE IN
THE SAFE
UPSTAIRS!!)

AT THAT MOMENT, OUTSIDE THE HOUSE...

THERE'S SHOOTING GOING ON!
COME ON, BOYS, WE'LL
GET THOSE CROOKS!

CRACK!
BANG!
CLANK!

MEANWHILE BACK
AT THE HOUSE...

OUT OF MY WAY,
FROZEN-FACE!

KEEP QUIET, EVERYBODY AND
YOU WON'T GET HURT! LET OUT
A PEEP AND WE'LL BUY A
COFFIN!

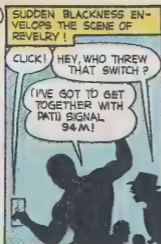
OH, DEAR, MY KNEES
ARE TREMBLING! I
MUST REST!

FIRECRACKERS!
WE'VE BEEN FOOLED!

BANG!
CRASH!
CRACK!

SPARKLER, AT LAST!
SO ALL THAT NOISE
WAS JUST A TRICK
TO LURE THE GUARDS
AWAY! HERE'S
WHERE THE FUN
BEGINS!

DON'T BE SUCH A
COWARD, SYLVESTER!
THEY WON'T HURT YOU!



SUDDENLY...

KID, THEY'VE PULLED
YOUR TRICK OF SWITCH-
ING OUT THE LIGHTS!



WHEN THE LIGHTS GO ON
ONCE MORE...

THEY'RE GONE! BUT
THEY DIDN'T GET THE
KORAM DIAMOND!

NO, BUT
THEY'LL BE
BACK FOR
IT!



SPARKLER MAY KNOW THAT
DIAMOND BRINGS BAD LUCK,
BUT HE'S GOT TO GET IT
FOR THE SKULL, WHOEVER
HE IS! SO WE'LL MAKE
SURE WE KNOW WHEN
SPARKLER RETURNS!



NIGHTS LATER... A ROW OF SINISTER
FIGURES STEALS ALONG A PATH LEADING
TO THE KIMBERLY MANSION!

THIS TIME THE PLACE
WILL BE QUIET! STRIPESY
AND THE KID WON'T BE
AROUND TO BUTT IN,
SPARKLER!



BUT A STEALTHY
FOOTSTEP FALLS
UPON A ROCK
EMBEDDED IN
THE PATH.



...AND THE MOMENTARY
PRESSURE SETS OFF AN
ALARM WHICH REGISTERS
ON A DISTANT RADIO SET...

THAT ALARM! SPARKLER
IS UP TO HIS DIRTY WORK
AGAIN! I'VE GOT TO STOP
HIM!



... I'M SORRY, GIRLS, I'LL HAVE
TO RETURN AND CONTINUE
MY STUDIES IN TROPICAL
FISH! I KNOW I'M BEING
IMPOLITE, BUT I CAN'T
HELP IT!



A FEW SECONDS LATER...

I NEVER
MET ANY-
ONE SO
RUDE IN
MY LIFE!

IMAGINE ANY
ONE PREFER-
RING TO STUDY
TROPICAL FISH
RATHER THAN
SEEING THE
OPERA WITH
US!



AND STILL LATER...

STEP ON IT, PAT! WE'VE
GOT TO HAND SPARKLER
THAT SURPRISE!

SURE, KID! BUT I'M
WARNING YOU THOSE
GIRLS WILL NEVER
HAVE ANY USE FOR
SYLVESTER PEMBERTON
AFTER THIS!



THE STAR-ROCKET RACER RISES INTO THE AIR, TO HOVER OVER THE KIMBERLY MANSION!

THEY'RE TRYING TO GET IN THROUGH A WINDOW

WE'LL SPOT THEIR GAME AND LAND ON THE ROOF, STRIPESY!

THE ROCKET-RACER COMES TO REST ON THE ROOF...AND TWIN THUNDERBOLTS STRIKE TERRIFYINGLY AT THE THUGS!

THEY'RE A BUNCH OF WALLFLOWERS, STRIPESY!

THE CLINGING IVY TYPE!

MORE THE POISON IVY KIND, STRIPESY! BUT I CAN DISH OUT A LITTLE POISON MYSELF!

I KNOW THE KIND YOU MEAN, KID!! I JUST HANDED THIS FELLOW A FISTFUL OF IT!!

OVERWHELMED BY THE SHOCK OF SURPRISE, MOST OF THE MOBSTERS MEEKLY SURRENDER!

SPARKLER ISN'T HERE, KID! THE REST ARE SMALL FRY...WHAT DO WE DO? TURN THEM OVER TO THE POLICE?

RIGHT, STRIPESY, AND THEN WE GO AFTER SPARKLER!

AT THAT MOMENT... STRIPESY'S EAGLE EYES PICK OUT A PHANTOM-LIKE FIGURE FLITTING ACROSS THE PATH...

THERE HE IS, KID! HE GOT AWAY WHILE WE WERE TAKING CARE OF HIS GANG!

BUT IN THE BLACKNESS OF NIGHT, THE CRIME CHIEFTAIN ELUDES HIS PERSUER

I CAN'T SEE HIM ANY MORE! IT'S TOO DARK. WE'LL HAVE A TOUGH TIME NOW TRYING TO FIND HIM!

DAWN BREAKS... AND A HARRIED
HOODLUM HESITATES...

NOW THE KID KNOWS I WANT THE
KORAM DIAMOND, AND HE'LL KEEP
A WATCH ON IT! I'VE FAILED THE
SKULL! HE'LL BE AFTER ME NOW,
AS WELL AS THE
POLICE!

THAT DIAMOND BROUGHT
ME BAD LUCK ALREADY. I'VE
GOT TO GET OUT OF
THE COUNTRY! IT'S
MY ONLY CHANCE TO
SAVE MY LIFE! I'LL
GET INTO ONE OF
THOSE SHIPS

THUS...A FEW HOURS
LATER...

SAFE AT LAST!
NOBODY WILL FIND
ME HERE.
EVERYBODY'S
OFF THE
SHIP, CAPTAIN!

MEANWHILE... A BAFFLED DUO SEEKS
THE COWERING CRIMINAL...

I DON'T KNOW WHERE
HE COULD HAVE GOT
TO, KID! THE MEN
WE CAPTURED RE-
VEALED HIS USUAL
HANGOUT, AND HE
ISN'T
THERE!

WE'LL TAKE A
LOOK AT THOSE
SHIPS DOWN AT
THE WATER-
FRONT! MAYBE
HE'S TRYING TO
GET OUT OF THE
COUNTRY!

THERE'S A LOT OF
HIDING PLACES ON
THESE OLD SHIPS!

IF HE'S STOW-
ED AWAY,
WE MAY NEVER
FIND HIM! BUT
WE'LL KEEP UP
THE SEARCH,
ANYWAY!

AS A DISAPPOINTING DAY
DRAWS TO A CLOSE...

WE'VE VISITED EVERY
SHIP IN THE HARBOR,
EXCEPT THE ONE
BEING FUMIGATED
AND THERE ISN'T A
SIGN OF SPARKLER!

WAIT! WHAT'S
THAT... OVER
THERE BY THE
STEAMER?

IT'S SPARKLER! AND HE'S DEAD!
THE KORAM DIAMOND BROUGHT HIM
BAD LUCK AFTER ALL!

THAT SHIP WAS BEING
FUMIGATED TO KILL RATS!
THE POISON FUMES KILLED
HIM!

STRANGE! SPARKLER
DIED AS HE WAS CON-
DEMNED TO DIE...BY
POISON GAS IN A LETHAL
CHAMBER. WHILE HE
THOUGHT HE WAS
RUNNING AWAY FROM
HIS FATE.... HE RAN
TO MEET IT!

BUT WE
STILL GOT TO
GET THE MAN
BEHIND SPARK-
LER... THE
SKULL!

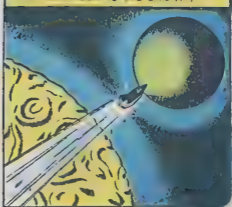
THE COMRADES IN COM-
BAT EVEN UP THE
SCORE FOR THE GAL-
LANT LEGIONNAIRES...
BUT WILL THE VIGILANTE
ESCAPE FROM THE
DESPERADO? CAN THE
SEVEN SOLDIERS OF
VICTORY MEET THE
THREAT OF THE SINIS-
TER SKULL...READ ON
TO FIND THE SOLUTION
TO THIS MAZE OF DEATH!

THE CRIMSON AVENGER



CHAPTER III
CRUEL AND
RUTHLESS AS DEATH IT-
SELF, POWERFUL AS THE
BRUTE BOVINE BEAST WHOSE
NAME HE BEARS, SUCH IS BULL
CORBIN WHO SEEKS A PRIZE FOR WHICH
MEN HAVE TOILED THROUGH THE CEN-
TURIES IN VANITY. MURDER FOLLOWS
MURDER ALONG THE BRIGAND BULLY'S
MENACING TRAIL UNTIL SUCCESS
CROWNS HIS CAREER OF CRIME. AND
THEN THE CRIMSON AVENGER TAKES
A HAND THAT FORCES THE DOOM-
ED DESPERADO TO SEEK SAFETY
IN FLIGHT TO FIND HIS
"DESTINY AMONG THE
STARS!"

STORMING THROUGH SPACE, A STRANGE
SHIP HURTLES AT INCREDIBLE SPEED
FROM THE MOON TO THE EARTH.



WITHIN THE SHIP, DR. EDWARD GRIMES, ITS SOLITARY PASSENGER, GUIDES ITS COURSE ...

EVERYBODY LAUGHED AT ME, BUT ALL THE SAME, THE SHIP IS A SUCCESS! I'M THE FIRST HUMAN BEING TO SET FOOT ON THE MOON! NOW TO RETURN HOME AND MAKE A FEW CHANGES

ABOVE THE WEIRD MAMMOTH CAVES OF KENTUCKY, A STONE ROOF GAPES OPEN AT THE VESSEL'S APPROACH ... AND THE SHIP NESTLES GENTLY WITHIN A VAST VAULT ...

SOON, I'LL MAKE ANOTHER TRIP, A LONGER ONE THIS TIME! I'LL STOCK THE SHIP WITH FOOD, AND EVERYTHING ELSE I NEED!

BUT IN THE SHADOWS OF THE COLOSSAL CAVE ...

THIS JOB THE SKULL GAVE ME IS EASY! THIS GUY DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO DEFEND HIMSELF!

OKAY, PAL! YOU'VE BEEN TO THE MOON! NOW TAKE A LOOK AT SOME STARS!

AHHH

THESE CONTROLS LOOK COMPLICATED! THE SKULL DIDN'T TELL ME HOW TO WORK IT ... LET ME SEE, WHICH BUTTON DO I PUSH FIRST?

MEANWHILE, HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY, EDITOR LEE TRAVIS SCANS A NEWS FLASH ...

SO CORBIN HAS BEEN SEEN IN KENTUCKY, PROWLING ABOUT MAMMOTH CAVES! TOO BAD THE POLICE COULDN'T PICK HIM UP!

HE WAS TOO TRICKY FOR THEM! THEY LOST HIS TRAIL!

SOUNDS LIKE A JOB FOR ME AND WING! WE'D BETTER ROUND UP CORBIN BEFORE HE DOES MORE DAMAGE!

THE POST

HOURS LATER ... IN A HUGE AIRLINER ...

I WONDER WHAT CORBIN IS DOING IN KENTUCKY? I'VE HEARD REPORTS OF ROCKET SHIP EXPERIMENTS THERE!

MAYBE CORBIN TRY ESCAPE FROM POLICE, GO TO MOON!



TWO PASSENGERS DROP OFF AT AN UN-SCHEDULED STOP ...

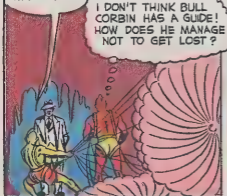
THERE ARE MANY ENTRANCES TO THE CAVES BELOW US! IF CORBIN HID IN THEM, WE'LL NEVER FIND HIM!

BATS HIDE IN CAVES! CORBIN NO BATS ... NOT YET!



YES, STRANGER, IT'S EASY TO GET LOST IN MAMMOTH CAVE! I WOULDN'T ENTER IT WITHOUT A GUIDE, IF I WERE YOU!

I DON'T THINK BULL CORBIN HAS A GUIDE! HOW DOES HE MANAGE NOT TO GET LOST?



CORBIN MUST HAVE A LANDMARK! I THINK, WING, WE'LL TAKE A LOOK AT THE PLACE WHERE THOSE ROCKET SHIP EXPERIMENTS ARE BEING CARRIED OUT!

WAIT TILL FOURTH OF JULY, SEE PLENTY OF LOCKETS!



AS THE CRIMSON CRIME-CRUSHER AND HIS FAITHFULLY DRAW NEAR, A BAFLED BANDIT FINDS HIMSELF BALKED BY THE COMPLEXITIES OF SCIENCE!

NO MATTER WHAT I DO, I CAN'T START THIS SHIP! LUCKY I DIDN'T KILL GRIMES! I'LL REVIVE HIM, AND HAVE HIM HANDLE THE CONTROLS FOR ME!



WHAT HAPPENED? WHO ARE YOU?

NEVER MIND WHO I AM! YOU'LL SHOW ME HOW TO OPERATE THAT SHIP... OR ELSE!



VERY WELL! FIRST, YOU MUST CLEAR THE ROCKET CHAMBERS! THEN YOU SWITCH ON THE REAR ROCKETS FIRST!

NOW YOU'RE TALKING, BUDDY! GO ON!



BUT THE LESSON IN ROCKET-OPERATION IS RUDELY INTERRUPTED!

MORE VISITORS! AND I THOUGHT I WOULD HAVE PERFECT SOLITUDE IN THESE CAVES!

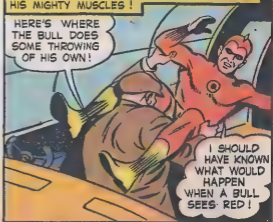
WE JUST DROPPED IN TO THROW THE BULL!



THE RUGGED RUFFIAN, ROARING WITH RAGE, DEMONSTRATES THE BEAST-LIKE POWER OF HIS MIGHTY MUSCLES!

HERE'S WHERE THE BULL DOES SOME THROWING OF HIS OWN!

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN A BULL SEES RED!



I DON'T NEED ANY ROCKETS TO SEND YOU FLYING, AVENGER!

OOPS! I COULD USE ANOTHER PARACHUTE!

AH, WO! BIG BRUISER TOO STRONG FOR MIST' CLIM-SON!



SO YOU'RE COMIN' BACK FOR MORE? YOU AND YOUR PAL ARE GOING A LONG WAY THIS TIME!

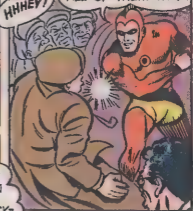
I'LL HANDLE YOU ALONE, BULL! HERE'S WHERE I TEACH YOU YOU'RE ONLY A RACKETEER, NOT A ROCKETEER!



AND NOW THE BULL'S BRUTE BRAWN PROVES HELPLESS BEFORE SKILLFUL SILENCE, AS THE CRIMSON CRIME-CRUSHER'S FISTS BEAT OUT A DEVASTATING TATTOO!

THIS PROVES THAT MY FIST CAN BE IN FOUR PLACES AT ONCE BULL... AND MAKE ALL OF THEM HURT!

HHHEY!



IF I COULD ONLY LAY MY HANDS ON YOU...

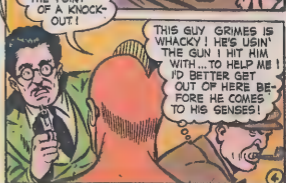
WHEN I HIT YOU THIS TIME, BULL, THERE'S GOING TO BE A MAM-MOTH CAVE-IN!

STOP, OR---



I'LL SHOOT!

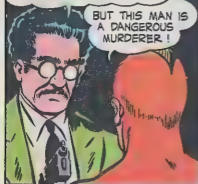
JUST WHEN I HAD HIM ON THE POINT OF A KNOCK-OUT!



THIS GUY GRIMES IS WHACKY! HE'S USIN' THE GUN I HIT HIM WITH... TO HELP ME! I'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE HE COMES TO HIS SENSES!

IF YOU HIT HIM AGAIN, YOU'LL
KNOCK HIM AGAINST THE
INSTRUMENT PANEL, AND
RUIN THE ROCKET SHIP! I
CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN!

BUT THIS MAN IS
A DANGEROUS
MURDERER!



THE BURLY BANDIT SEIZES
THE OPPORTUNITY TO ES-
CAPE!

OUT OF MY WAY,
BUDDY!

HE'S GETTING
AWAY! HE'LL
LOSE HIM-
SELF IN THE
CAVE!



HOURS LATER... AFTER A
LONG SEARCH THROUGH
GLOOMY TUNNELS...

IT'S NO USE, WING. THERE'RE
HUNDREDS OF MILES OF
TUNNELS IN THESE CAVES!
A MAN COULD HIDE OUT
HERE FOR YEARS!

BUT BULL, NOT GO
FAR FROM LOCKET
SHIP, MIST CLIMSON!



SUDDENLY... THERE IS THE SCAPE OF LEATH-
ER-SHOD FEET AGAINST HARD ROCK...

I HEAR NOISE FEW FEET
AHEAD! MAYBE WE FIND
BULL, AFTER ALL!

IF WE DO, WE
WON'T LET HIM
ESCAPE THIS
TIME!



BIG FOOTPRINT
IN DUST
MUST BE
BULL!

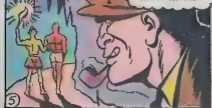
FINDING THAT IS
REAL COINCIDENCE!



COINCIDENCE? LITTLE DOES
THE AVENGER KNOW...

MAYBE WE CATCH
BULL BY SURPRISE,
MIST CLIMSON!

HA! THE
AVENGER
DOESN'T REALIZE
I LEFT THAT
FOOTPRINT
TO DRAW HIM
INTO A TRAP!
JUST A FEW
FEET MORE...



SUDDENLY THERE IS THE
RENDING ROAR OF EXPLOD-
ING DYNAMITE!

CAVES EXPLODE!
NO WAY TO GET
OUT!



THAT FIXES THE AVEN-
GER! NOW TO GET THE
ROCKET SHIP AGAIN... AND
THIS TIME I'LL KNOW HOW
TO HANDLE IT!



MOMENTS LATER...



... WITH THIS BULLET!

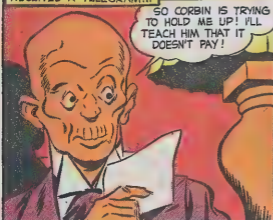


BUT NOW THE GREED FOR GOLD DANGLES ITS GLITTERING LURE BEFORE THE GRASPING MIND OF THE MURDEROUS GANGSTER.

THE SKULL WANTS THIS SHIP, AND I'M WILLING TO TURN IT OVER TO HIM... BUT I'LL HAVE TO GET PAID! MONEY MEANS NOTHING TO THE SKULL...I'LL ASK FOR A MILLION DOLLARS!



LATER...THE SKULL IN HIS PALATIAL RETREAT RECEIVES A TELEGRAM...



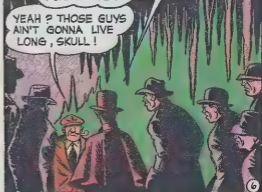
I SHALL USE MY MILLIONS TO PUNISH CORBIN, NOT TO REWARD HIM!

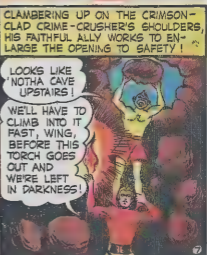
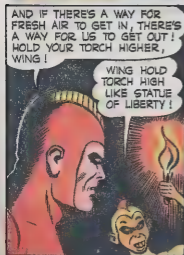
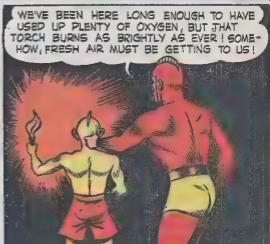
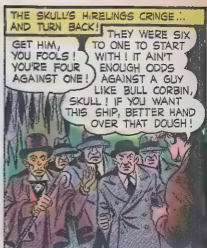


AS IN THE WORLD ABOVE, DAY DRAWS TO A CLOSE THE SKULL AND THE HARDENED HOODLUM MEET IN THE CAVERNS OF ETERNAL GLOOM!



THE MONEY MEANS NOTHING TO ME, BUT I DON'T LIKE BEING DOUBLE-CROSSED! THE WHOLE MILLION WILL GO TO THOSE WHO PUNISH YOU!



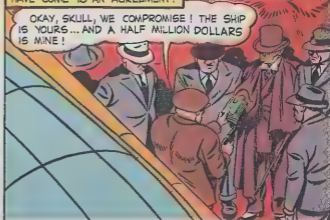


NOW TO SEE ABOUT THAT ROCKET-SHIP AGAIN! BUT IT MAY BE ALREADY TOO LATE! CORBIN MAY HAVE STOLEN IT AND LEFT!



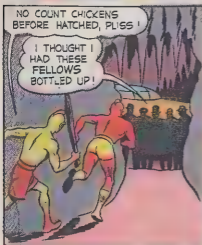
AT THE ROCKET-SHIP CAVE, THE SKULL AND BULL CORBIN HAVE COME TO AN AGREEMENT!

OKAY, SKULL, WE COMPROMISE! THE SHIP IS YOURS... AND A HALF MILLION DOLLARS IS MINE!



NO COUNT CHICKENS BEFORE HATCHED, PLISS!

I THOUGHT I HAD THESE FELLOWS BOTTLED UP!



WE GOT OUT THROUGH THE SECOND STORY! HERE'S SOME MORE OF THE SAME STUFF YOU GOT BEFORE, CORBIN

YOUR PUNCHES DON'T HURT ME, AVENGER!



THIS LOOK LIKE ICICLE, BUT HOT STUFF!

OWWWW

BANG



HEYYYY!!

EXCUSE, PLISS! WING MEAN TO DO...



LIKE THIS!

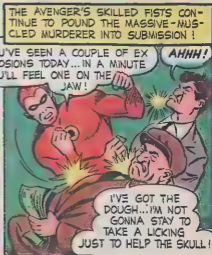
OW, THAT THING IS SHARP!



THE AVENGER'S SKILLED FISTS CONTINUE TO POUND THE MASSIVE-MUSCLED MURDERER INTO SUBMISSION!

YOU'VE SEEN A COUPLE OF EXPLOSIONS TODAY... IN A MINUTE YOU'LL FEEL ONE ON THE JAW!

AHHH!



THE DOUBLY-TREACHEROUS THUG TURNS TO SEEK HIS OWN SAFETY!

NOW'S MY CHANCE FOR A GETAWAY!

THIS SMALL-FRY HOODLUM HAS PICKED A BAD TIME TO PRACTICE SOMER-SAULTS!

SO LONG, AVENGER! TOO BAD YOU CAN'T COME WITH ME!

TRY THE OTHER DOOR, WING!

I FLY, MIST CLIMSON!

WITH THE ROAR OF ROCKETS, THE SHIP RISES INTO THE AIR!

COME ALONG, AVENGER, YOU'LL GET A SWELL RIDE!

LET GO, WING, BEFORE WE GO UP TOO FAR!

AH, WOE, BULL-GET AWAY!

AND BY THE TIME WE GET BACK TO THE CAVE, THE SKULL WILL BE GONE! NEVER MIND, WING, BULL CORBIN WILL HAVE TO LAND AGAIN... AND NEXT TIME WE'LL GET HIM!

BUT WITHIN THE RACING VESSEL... BULL CORBIN GLOATS AT HIS GOOD FORTUNE!

I'VE GOT A HALF-MILLION DOLLARS! I'M RICH... AND FREE! I'LL LAND THIS SHIP, DISAPPEAR, AND THEN I'LL BE ABLE TO ENJOY LIFE!

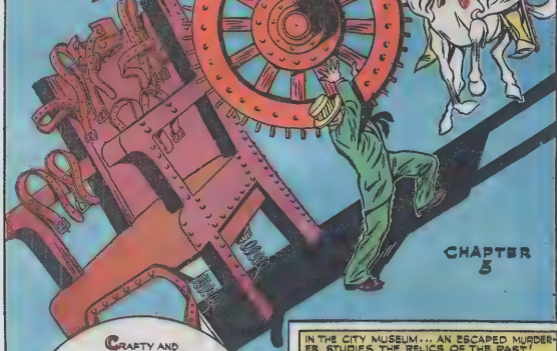
BUT AS THE TRIUMPHANT THUG PULLS A CONTROL LEVER...

THE SHIP WON'T TURN! GRIMES MUST HAVE GIVEN ME THE WRONG DIRECTIONS! I CAN'T GET BACK TO EARTH!

TO SOLITARY CONFINEMENT WAS BULL CORBIN CONDEMNED... AND SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IS HIS DESTINY! FATED TO BE ALONE FOREVER, HE SPEEDS ON TOWARD THE STARS...

ONCE MORE JUSTICE HAS TRIUMPHED! BUT MEANWHILE, THE ARCH-VILLAIN HAS ESCAPED! THE SKULL REMAINS FREE TO USE THE POWER OF HIS WEALTH AND EVIL!

THE SHINING KNIGHT

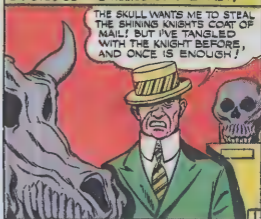


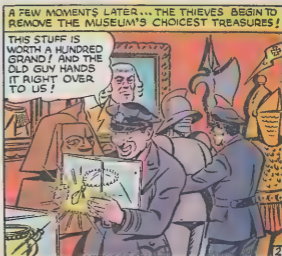
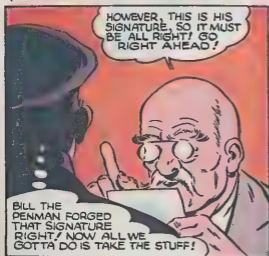
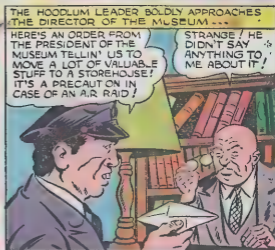
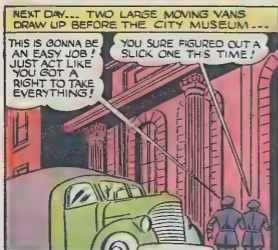
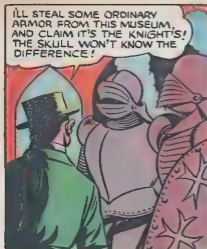
CHAPTER 5

CRAFTY AND CUNNING AS A CORNERED RAT, MATT GREIDER TRIES TO SHUN THE SHINING KNIGHT... AND FINDS HIMSELF SQUARELY ATHWART THE CHIVALROUS CHAMPION'S STERN PATH! CHANCE PUTS THE SHINING KNIGHT, BEREFT OF GLISTENING SWORD AND GLEAMING LANCE, WITHIN THE MENACING MURDERER'S GREEDY POWER... AND ONLY HIS OWN NIMBLE WITS AND VALIANT HEART CAN CARVE A PATH TO FREEDOM AND PUT AN END TO THE SINISTER CRIME-STUDDED CAREER OF THE MONSTER WHO TRIES TO CHEAT JUSTICE AND SEEKS TO SLAY A

"KNIGHT WITHOUT ARMOR"

IN THE CITY MUSEUM... AN ESCAPED MURDERER STUDIES THE RELICS OF THE PAST!





WHILE THE THUG LEADER...

TAKE THAT ALONG, TOO!

OKAY, BOSS, YOU GIVE THE ORDERS!



IT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR. THEY'VE GOT PERMISSION! THEY'RE JUST MOVING THOSE VALUABLES TO A SAFE PLACE!

THEY WERE SAFE RIGHT HERE!

LET US NOT QUESTION THE WISDOM OF OUR SUPERIORS, JUSTIN!



HASTE THEE, MY BRAVE STEED, ARE THE TREACHEROUS VILLAINS HIE THEM TO SAFETY!



BUT MEANWHILE... JUSTIN, WHO HIDES HIS IDENTITY AS THE SHINING KNIGHT BEHIND THE GUISE OF ASSISTANT TO THE CURATOR, PROFESSOR MORESBY, APPROACHES THE MUSEUM...

GREAT SCOTT, PROFESSOR, THEY'RE REMOVING ALL THE MUSEUM'S MOST VALUABLE POSSESSIONS!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF, JUSTIN!



AT THAT MOMENT...

THIS FINISHES THE JOB! NOW WE'D BETTER SCRAM!

IT'S MATT GREIDER, THE ESCAPED MURDERER! HE'S THE ONE BEHIND ALL THIS!

EXCUSE ME, PROFESSOR MORESBY, THE SHINING KNIGHT HAS SOME WORK TO DO!



SWIFT SECONDS LATER, AT THE STALL BENEATH THE MUSEUM WHERE WINGED VICTORY, HIS MAGIC STEED IS HIDDEN...

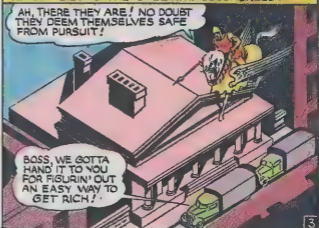
AH, VICTORY, WE RIDE FORTH ONCE MORE TO FOIL A BASE VARLET'S FOUL PLAN!



SOARING HIGH ABOVE THE MUSEUM, THE CHIVALROUS KNIGHT SIGHS THE SPEEDING SCOUNDRELS...

AH, THERE THEY ARE! NO DOUBT THEY DEEM THEMSELVES SAFE FROM PURSUIT!

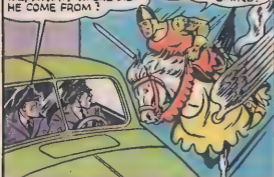
BOSS, WE GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU FOR FIGURIN' OUT AN EASY WAY TO GET RICH!



WINGED VICTORY SWOOPS DOWN LIKE AN EAGLE STRIKING AT ITS PREY!

I TRIED TO STAY AWAY FROM THE SHINING KNIGHT, BUT HE FOLLOWED ME, ANYWAY! WHERE DID HE COME FROM?

TURN BACK, IGNOBLE VARLETS AND RETURN YOUR ILL-GOTTEN GAINS!



RUN HIM DOWN! HIS ARMOR CAN TURN BULLETS, BUT THE WEIGHT OF THIS TRUCK WILL CRUSH BOTH HIM AND HIS HORSE!

I'M STEPPIN' ON THE GAS, BOSS!



BUT THE KNIGHT'S SWORD, POSSESSED OF MAGIC POWERS BY VIRTUE OF ANCIENT MERLIN'S WIZARDRY SHEARS THROUGH METAL AS IF IT WERE CHEESE!

VILE EVILDOERS, WHEN I COMMAND THEE TO STOP, I JEST NOT!



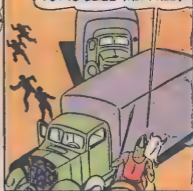
THUS WILL I HANDLE THE OTHER MOVING MONSTER ALSO, SO THAT NEITHER ONE WILL ESCAPE!

BOSS, WE'RE STUCK! WE CAN'T MOVE WITHOUT A MOTOR OR WHEELS!



THE PANIC STRICKEN HOODLUMS SCATTER LIKE FLEEING RATS!

THESE VERMIN FLEE SO FAST, I SHALL BE HARD PUT TO SEIZE THEM ALL!



HEY, THAT THING IS CHOKIN' ME!

IF THOU HAD THY DESERTS, THOU ROGUE, THOU WOULDST BE CHOKED BY A HEMPEN ROPE!



LOOKS LIKE WE'RE ALL GETTIN' TOGETHER AGAIN!

LIE THERE, VILLAINS, WHILE I SEEK THY MURDEROUS MASTER!



BUT THE FEARFUL FELON IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND!

THE MISCREANT HAS ESCAPED! NOW MUST I TURN THE OTHER EVILDOERS OVER TO THOSE WHO WILL DEAL WITH THEM LAWFULLY!



LATER... AFTER THE POLICE HAVE REMOVED THE CAPTURED THUGS...

THIS MUD ALMOST CHOKED ME, AND EVERY TIME I LIFTED MY HEAD TO BREATHE, I WAS AFRAID THE KNIGHT WOULD SEE ME! BUT HE'S GONE NOW! AND I'LL HAVE TO FIND A HIDE-OUT!



THAT NIGHT... AT A HUGE POWER STATION...

MY BROTHER IS SUPERINTENDENT OF THIS STATION! HE'S CHANGED HIS NAME SO NOBODY KNOWS WE'RE RELATED! I'LL MAKE HIM TAKE CARE OF ME!



YOU'RE A THIEF AND A MURDERER! THE POLICE ARE AFTER YOU AT THIS MINUTE! I'LL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU!

OKAY, BUT IF I'M CAUGHT... I'LL SAY YOU HID ME! THEY'LL SEND YOU TO JAIL, TOO!



LET ME HIDE HERE FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, AND I'LL CLEAR OUT AND NEVER BOTHER YOU AGAIN!

ALL RIGHT... BUT JUST FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS! WE'VE GOT SOME REPAIRS TO DO - I'LL HAVE TO HOLD THINGS UP UNTIL THEN!



HIDDEN IN THE HUGE STATION, THE DESPERATE CRIMINAL WOOS SLEEP IN VAIN! THE ROAR OF RUSHING WATER SENDS STRANGE THOUGHTS TUMBLING THROUGH HIS HEAD!

I'D HAVE MADE A SUCCESSFUL GETAWAY IF NOT FOR THE KNIGHT! HOW COULD HE HAVE GOT WISE?



THAT YOUNG MAN WITH PROFESSOR MORESBY SAW ME AND DUCKED! MAYBE HE'S THE ONE THAT WARNED THE SHINING KNIGHT!



OR MAYBE HE'S THE SHINING KNIGHT HIMSELF? I'M GOING TO HIRE SOME MORE CROOKS TO HELP ME, THEN FIND HIM, AND SEE! I'LL PAY HIM BACK FOR STOPPING MY SCHEME - AND -MAYBE GET WHAT THE SKULL WANTS AFTER ALL!



NEXT DAY... AS NIGHT IS FALLING...

YOU SUCCEEDED IN RECOVERING EVERYTHING, JUSTIN! IF NOT FOR YOU, THE MUSEUM WOULD HAVE SUFFERED A TERRIBLE LOSS!

IT'S JUST PART OF THE DEBT I OWE YOU, PROFESSOR MORESBY!



SUDDENLY...

THERE THEY ARE, BOYS! THEY'RE THE ONES I HIRED YOU TO GET!

TAKE IT EASY. WE ALWAYS DO OUR JOB RIGHT!



AHHHH...

LEAVE THE OLD GUY. THE YOUNG FELLOW IS THE ONE I WANT!



WITH THE SPEED OF A WELL-OILED MACHINE, THE HIRED KIDNAPPERS CARRY OUT THEIR EVIL ORDERS--AND JUSTIN IS PLACED IN A WAITING AUTOMOBILE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SNATCH THIS GUY FOR, BOSS? HE DON'T LOOK LIKE HE'S GOT DOUGH!

I THINK HE'S GOT SOMETHING ELSE I WANT... AND I'M GOING TO GET IT!



LATER...

WHERE AM I... WHAT HAPPENED? (I MUSTN'T LET HIM KNOW I RECOGNIZE HIM!)

YOU'RE THE SHINING KNIGHT! ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS CONFESS AND I'LL LET YOU GO! (I HOPE HE'S FOOL ENOUGH TO BELIEVE ME!)



I CAN'T LIE AND DENY I'M THE SHINING KNIGHT, BUT I DON'T WANT TO LET HIM KNOW HE'S GUESSED RIGHT, EITHER! ALL I CAN DO IS KEEP QUIET!

YOU WON'T GET NO PLACE BY NOT TALKIN'!



BUT JUSTIN OBSTINATELY REFUSES TO ANSWER THE CRIMINAL'S QUESTION!

YOU BETTER TALK... OR ELSE!



ALL I'LL SAY IS THAT YOU'D BETTER LET ME GO OR THE POLICE WILL DO THE TALKING FOR ME!

ENRAGED BY HIS CAPTIVE'S SILENCE,
THE HOMICIDAL HOODLUM DEVISES
A DEADLY SCHEME OF REVENGE!

MAYBE A LITTLE DUCKIN'
WILL HELP YOU MAKE
UP YOUR MIND!

MY MIND'S ALREADY
MADE UP! I HAVE NOTHING
TO SAY TO YOU!

THE TOUCH OF A FINGER
ON A SWITCH SETS THE
GIANT WHEEL IN MOTION!

SO LONG, WISE GUY!
I'LL BE BACK IN HALF
AN HOUR TO SEE IF
YOU WANT TO TELL ME
ANYTHING!

IN HALF AN HOUR
I MAY BE DEAD!

EVERYTIME THAT WHEEL DUCKS ME,
I DROWN JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE!
I'LL HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!
I WISH I HAD A KNIFE!

MEANWHILE... PROFESSOR
MORESBY REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS
TO DISCOVER
THAT JUSTIN IS GONE!

YOU'RE WEAK, PROFESSOR.
YOU OUGHT TO REST!

I'M ALL RIGHT!
(JUSTIN MUST
NEED HELP!)

THE MAN OF LEARNING RESOLVES
TO BECOME A MAN OF ACTION!

AH, VICTORY, YOU WILL FIND ME
A POOR SUBSTITUTE FOR YOUR
MASTER! BUT I FEAR GREATLY
THAT HE IS IN DANGER!

THE GUARD SAID THE
KIDNAPPERS WENT IN
THIS DIRECTION! PERHAPS
I MAY SUCCEED IN TRAILING
THEM!

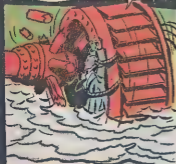
AS PROFESSOR MORESBY BOARS UNSTEADILY
THROUGH THE SKIES, DEATH DRAWS
NEAR JUSTIN!

THIS WHEEL SEEMS LOOSE - THEY MUST
HAVE BEEN REPAIRING IT! IF I CAN
THROW MY WEIGHT TO ONE SIDE, IT
WILL UNBALANCE IT COMPLETELY!

AH! I SUCCEEDED IN PUTTING A STRAIN
ON THE WHEEL! IT'S VIBRATING!

THE VIOLENT VIBRATIONS SHAKE THE LOOSE WHEEL FROM ITS AXLE - AND IT PLUNGES DOWN TOWARD THE WATERY DEPTH BELOW!

NOW, IF ONLY THE WHEEL LANDS RIGHT SIDE UP...



ITS FALL BROKEN BY THE WATER, THE WHEEL ROLLS ALONG THE RIVER BOTTOM AND COMES TO REST ON ONE OF THE BANKS!

THE VIBRATION AND THE FALL LOOSENED THESE ROPES! NOW I CAN SLIP MY HAND FREE!



WHILE DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS SWOOP A LOVAL FRIEND AND A FAITHFUL STEED!

PROFESSOR MORESBY! HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

VICTORY'S KEEN EYES SIGHTED H.S MASTER FROM THOUSANDS OF FEET UP! JUSTIN, I THINK YOU WILL NEED YOUR SWORD AND ARMOR!



MOMENTS LATER...

YOU WILL USE YOUR WEAPONS BETTER THAN I COULD, JUSTIN!

I HAVE A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH CERTAIN VILE WRETCHES! HO, THERE, VICTORY WE MUST BE OFF!!



WHILE IN THE POWER STATION, A VIOLENT QUARREL IS BREWING!

I SAID I WOULD LET YOU HIDE HERE FOR A SHORT TIME, NOT USE THIS PLACE TO COMMIT YOUR CRIMES!

I TAKE ORDERS FROM NOBODY BUT THE SKULL! TEACH HIM A LESSON, BOYS!



AHHHH...

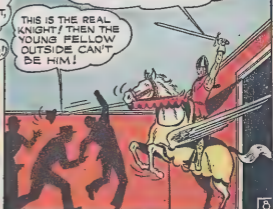
I'M GOIN' OUT TO SEE IF THAT GUY WILL TALK YET! IF HE WON'T, I'LL LET YOU FELLOWS WORK ON HIM! (IF HE'S REALLY THE SHINING KNIGHT, I'LL TRADE HIM HIS LIFE FOR HIS ARMOR!!)

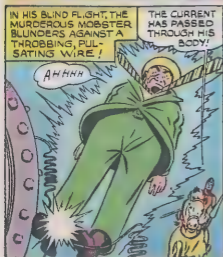
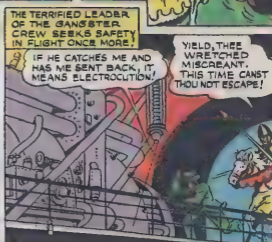


SUDDENLY...

HOLA, KNAVE, I HEAR THOU WERT SEEKING ME!

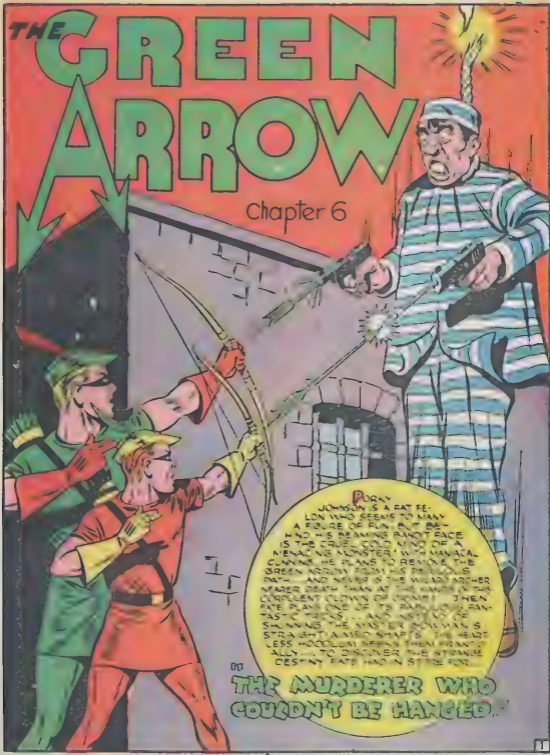
THIS IS THE REAL KNIGHT! THEN THE YOUNG FELLOW OUTSIDE CAN'T BE HIM!





THE GREEN ARROW

Chapter 6



PORRY JOHNSON IS A FAT FEL-
LOW WHO SEEMS TO MANY
A BUDDY OF FUN. BUT BE-
HIND HIS BEAMING BROAD FACE
IS THE CRUEL, COLD KING OF A
MENACING MONSTER WITH MANICAL
CUNNING. HE PLANS TO REVENGE THE
GREEN ARROW FOR HIS PAINFUL
DEATH. AND NEVER IN THE WILD ARCHER
MIARED DEATH THAN AT THE HANDS OF THIS
CORRUPT CLOWN OF CRIME. THEN
PATE PLAYS ONE OF ITS BARBARIAN, PAN-
TASTIC TRICKS... AND NEXT TO BE
SHANNING THE MASTER BOWMAN'S
STRAIGHT-A-NEED SHARPS. THE HEART-
LESS HOOLOON SPURS THEM FRANTIC-
ALLY... TO DISCOVER THE STRANGE
DESTINY PATE HAD IN STORE FOR

00
**THE MURDERER WHO
COULDN'T BE HANGED.**

WITHIN AN ARTIFICIAL JUNGLE LOCATED IN THE HEART OF A METROPOLIS, MILD DR. BOGGS IS BUSY PERFORMING MIRACLES...

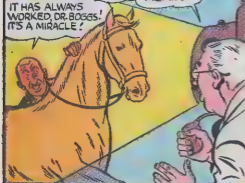
IS THAT THE OLDEST HORSE YOU COULD FIND? YES, DR. BOGGS! HE'S DYING OF OLD AGE!



AS THE TWO MEN WAIT TENSELY, AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION TAKES PLACE: ANCIENT EYES GLOW BRIGHT, HOLLOWES FILL, BENT LEGS STRAIGHTEN.

IT WORKS! HE'S YOUNG AGAIN!

IT HAS ALWAYS WORKED, DR. BOGGS! IT'S A MIRACLE!



BUT A SUDDEN INTERRUPTION CLAIMS THE SCIENTIST'S ATTENTION...

HOW DO YOU DO, DR. BOGGS! I AM PROFESSOR JOHNSON, OF BOTHAM COLLEGE! THE ONLY TIME I EVER GOT INSIDE A COLLEGE WAS WHEN I ROBBED THE TREASURER'S OFFICE!

I'M ALWAYS GLAD TO MEET A COLLEAGUE, PROFESSOR JOHNSON!



WE'LL SEE WHAT MY VIOLET LIFE-RAY WILL DO FOR HIM!

I DON'T KNOW, DR. BOGGS! THIS IS THE BIGGEST ANIMAL WE'VE EVER TRIED IT ON!



THE AMAZING LABORATORY IS FILLED WITH THE LIVING WITNESSES OF DR. WILLIAM BOGGS' MAGIC ART...

THE ANIMALS IN THE TOP ROW ARE UNTREATED...



THOSE ON THE BOTTOM HAVE BEEN BATHED IN THE LIFE-RAY! WITH MY MACHINE I CAN GRANT PERPETUAL YOUTH! AT WILL!

I'VE HEARD A GREAT DEAL OF YOUR WONDERFUL INVENTION, DR. BOGGS! I'M INTERESTED IN KNOWING HOW IT WORKS!

IT'S VERY SIMPLE! SIMPLY PRESS THIS BUTTON...

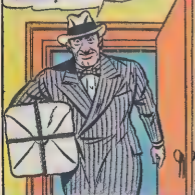


THANKS FOR TELLING ME ALL ABOUT IT, PAL! NOW THE SKULL WILL KNOW HOW TO USE IT!

WHAT... AHHHHH...



THAT WAS A LOT EASIER THAN HOLDING UP A BANK! NOW, IF THE GREEN ARROW DON'T GET ON MY TRAIL, I'LL BE SAFE!



I'LL LET THE POST OFFICE TAKE CARE OF DELIVERING THIS MACHINE TO THE SKULL! BUT JUST TO MAKE SURE THE GREEN ARROW DON'T COME AFTER ME...



I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM FIRST!

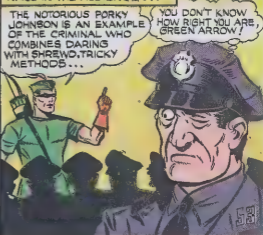


A FEW DAYS LATER, AS THE GREEN ARROW CONTINUES HIS SCHEDULED LECTURE TOUR...



GENTLEMEN, IN THE PAST WEEK, I'VE SPOKEN TO MANY POLICE AUDIENCES ON FIGHTING CRIME! TODAY I WISH TO SPEAK ABOUT WAYS OF HANDLING THE EXCEPTIONAL CRIMINAL...

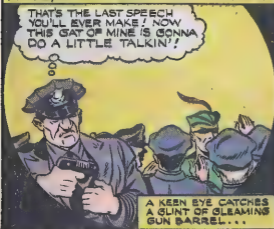
WHILE IN THE AUDIENCE...



THE NOTORIOUS PORKY JOHNSON IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE CRIMINAL WHO COMBINES DARING WITH SHREWD, TRICKY METHODS...

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW RIGHT YOU ARE, GREEN ARROW!

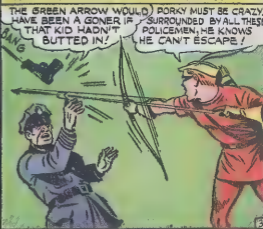
AS THE GREEN ARROW'S LECTURE COMES TO AN END, AMID A HURRICANE OF APPLAUSE...



THAT'S THE LAST SPEECH YOU'LL EVER MAKE! NOW THIS GAT OF MINE IS GONNA DO A LITTLE TALKIN'!

A KEEN EYE CATCHES A GLINT OF GLEAMING GUN BARREL...

A BOWSTRING TWANGS... AND A SWIFT ARROW QUIVERS THROUGH THE AIR!



THE GREEN ARROW WOULD PORKY MUST BE CRAZY! HAVE BEEN A GONER IF THAT KID HADN'T BUTTED IN! SURROUNDED BY ALL THESE POLICEMEN, HE KNOWS HE CAN'T ESCAPE!

BUT THE CLEVER CRIMINAL HAS MADE CUNNING PREPARATIONS! AS THE POLICE ATTEMPT TO SEIZE HIM...

THIS IS GOING TO BE SOME GETAWAY! A COUPLE OF HUNDRED COPS AROUND ME... AND THEY CAN'T LAY A FINGER ON ME!

HE'S GOT A BLACK WIRE AROUND HIS WAIST! HE'S BEING PULLED UP BY OTHER CROOKS ON THE ROOF!

RIISING SWIFTLY, THE WOULD-BE MURDERER DISAPPEARS THROUGH AN OPENING ABOVE!

SURROUND THE BUILDING!

WE'LL GO UP AFTER HIM! HE CAN'T ESCAPE US FOR LONG!

BUT ON THE ROOFTOP...

THEY THOUGHT THEY'D CATCH ME, AND HAVE ME HANGED! BUT IN TWO MINUTES, WE'LL BE SAFE IN THIS AUTOGIRO!

YEAH, THEM COPS WILL BE RUNNIN' AROUND IN CIRCLES!

SECONDS LATER...

IT'S A CLEAN GETAWAY!

HE MADE FOOLS OF US! AND OF THE GREEN ARROW, TOO!

BUT THE GREEN ARROW AND SPEEDY WASTE NO PRECIOUS MOMENTS IN IDLE REGRET! HASTENING TO THE WAITING ARROWPLANE...

HE WON'T EVEN KNOW WE'RE FOLLOWING HIM!

AUTOGIROS CAN'T FLY FAST! IN THE ARROWPLANE, WE'LL BE ABLE TO KEEP PORKY JOHNSON IN SIGHT!

HE'S HEADING SOUTH! I WONDER IF HE HAS A HIDEOUT NEAR HERE?

IT CAN'T BE FAR AWAY! THAT SMALL SHIP HASN'T GOT MUCH OF A CRUISING RANGE!

THOSE TREES SHUT OUT THE LIGHT! WE'RE LIABLE TO LOSE HIM!

WE'LL FIND HIM AGAIN, GREEN ARROW! AN AUTOGIRO ISN'T AN EASY THING TO HIDE!

AS THE RACING ARROWPLANE COMES OUT FROM BENEATH THE CANOPY OF TREES...

THE AUTOGIRO ISN'T IN SIGHT! IT MUST HAVE LANDED!

THAT PEAK WOULD MAKE A SWELL HIDE-OUT FOR A CROOK, GREEN ARROW! THE ONLY WAY TO GET TO IT WOULD BE BY FLYING!

THEN THAT'S THE WAY I'LL GET THERE! ALL SET FOR THE CATAPULT, SPEEDY!

ALLEYVOOP!

FLASHING THROUGH THE AIR WITH THE SPEED OF A SHOOTING STAR, THE WIZARD ARCHER STREAKS TOWARD THE TOP OF THE LONE PEAK...

WON'T PORKY BE SURPRISED WHEN I DROP IN!

YEAH! I FOOLED THE GREEN ARROW THAT TIME... HEY, WHERE...?

NICE HIDEOUT YOU'VE GOT HERE, PORKY! I THOUGHT I'D TAKE A LOOK AT IT!

KILL HIM! MURDER HIM! THROW HIM OFF THE CLIFF!

PORKY, YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A HAM!

OW! I BROKE MY HAND!

ALL YOU'VE GOT IS A CASE OF BRUISED PIG'S KNUCKLES!

AHHHH...

I THINK THAT PUNCH BROUGHT HOME THE BACON, PORKY!

BUT NOW, RECOVERING FROM THEIR SURPRISE, THE CORPULENT CRIMINAL'S HENCHMEN ENTER THE FRAY!

HERE'S WHERE WE SCORE A COUPLE BULL'S-EYES!

YEAH, THESE LEAD SLUGS OUGHT TO TEAR THE GREEN ARROW APART!



BUT TWO SLENDER SHAFTS SING THROUGH THE AIR...

HERE'S WHERE A COUPLE OF ARROWS TEAR THOSE LEAD SLUGS OF YOURS APART!



WHILE THE WIZARD ARCHER'S BACK IS TURNED, PORKY GRASPS A MURDEROUS WEAPON!

I'LL BREAK THE GREEN ARROW IN TWO WITH THIS CLUB! I'LL SMASH HIM TO BITS!



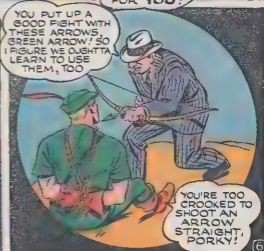
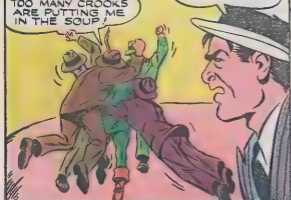
BUT THE MASTER BOWMAN TURNS QUICKLY!



BUT AS MORE MOBSTERS JOIN THE FRAY...

TOO MANY CROOKS ARE PUTTING ME IN THE SOUP!

DON'T KILL HIM, BOYS! I GOTTA GOOD WAY FOR HIM TO DIE!



ALL I NEED IS PRACTICE, GREEN ARROW! AND YOU'RE GONNA HELP ME GET IT!

THEY LEFT MY HEAD FREE BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO SEE ME TRY TO DUCK THE ARROWS! BUT IF ONE STRIKES CLOSE ENOUGH, AND I HAVE A FEW SECONDS...

NOT BAD, PORKY! BUT YOU DON'T HOLD THE BOW RIGHT! HOLD IT CLOSER TO YOUR FACE!

OKAY, ARROW, I'LL TAKE YOUR ADVICE!

BUT AS THE FAT FELON RELEASES THE NEXT ARROW...

OW! THAT STRING SNAPPED BACK AND HIT ME IN THE FACE!

THE GREEN ARROW KNEW THAT WOULD HAPPEN! THAT'S WHY HE TOLD YOU TO HOLD YOUR FACE CLOSER!

ATTABOY, BOSS! WHY WASTE TIME ON HIM?

MEANWHILE, A WORRIED LAD AWAITS THE RETURN OF THE ACE ARCHER...

THE GREEN ARROW OUGHT TO BE BACK BY NOW! SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED! I'D BETTER DO A LITTLE INVESTIGATING!

JUST FOR THAT, GREEN ARROW, YOU DIE RIGHT AWAY!

GREEN ARROW, YOU DIE RIGHT NOW!

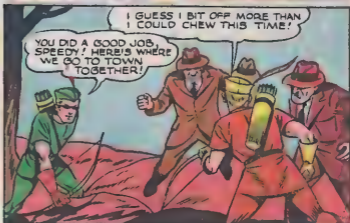
AS THE BLOATED BANDIT, AT A RANGE SO SHORT HE CANNOT MISS, RAISES THE WIZARD ARCHER'S BOW...

THERE'S A TREE ON THAT PEAK! I'LL ANCHOR AN ARROWLINE IN IT, AND USE THE LINE TO CLIMB UP BY!

SEEMS LIKE I'M GETTING HERE JUST IN TIME!

TOO BAD THAT KID SPEEDY AIN'T HERE TO DIE WITH YOU, GREEN ARROW!

THAT'S MY CUE, CHUM!



THE PAUNCHY LEADER IS MAKING A DESPERATE EFFORT TO ESCAPE!

AS HE HASTENS HIS PERILOUS DESCENT, HIS HANDS SLIP ON THE SMOOTH SURFACE OF A ROCK...

THE FRIGHTENED FELON CLUTCHES AT A SMALL SHRUB, AND TEMPORARILY HALTS HIS FALL...

I CAN'T LET GREEN ARROW CAPTURE ME! I'D BE SENT BACK TO THE PEN TO HANG!

HELP! SOMEBODY! GREEN ARROW!

SO THERE'S PORKY! EVEN THOUGH HE'S A MURDERER, SPEEDY, I'LL DO MY BEST TO SAVE HIM!

HELP!

HOLD ON, PORKY! I'M SHOOTING AN ARROWLINE YOUR WAY!

I HOPE THIS ARROWLINE REACHES FAR ENOUGH! THIS BOW HAS LOST SOME OF ITS ELASTICITY SINCE PORKY HANDEDLED IT!

HURRY UP, GREEN ARROW! I CAN'T HOLD ON MUCH LONGER!

THE ARROWLINE STREAKS DOWNWARD... AND FALLS SHORT... AND WITH A FINAL DESPAIRING SHRIEK THE TERRIFIED THUG PLUNGES DOWNWARD TO HIS DOOM!

SHORT BY A FEW INCHES!

PORKY WAS A QUEER VICTIM OF FATE, SPEEDY! HE WAS CONDEMNED TO DIE AT THE END OF A ROPE...

AND HE DIED BECAUSE A ROPE WASN'T LONG ENOUGH!

NOW IT'S UP TO US TO FIND THE MAN WHO HELPED HIM BREAK JAIL! WE'LL SEARCH THE HIDEOUT, AND PERHAPS WE'LL FIND A CLUE!

THE MAN WHO HELPED PORKY ESCAPE IS THE SKULL, THE POSSESSOR OF VAST WEALTH! HERE'S HIS ADDRESS, SPEEDY! PORKY SHIPPED HIM A MACHINE, HE STOLE FROM A DR. BOGGS!

WE'D BETTER FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF MACHINE IT WAS, GREEN ARROW!

THUS, SHORTLY AFTERWARD, AT THE LABORATORY OF DR. BOGGS..

THE POSSESSOR OF THAT MACHINE WILL NEVER GROW OLD, GREEN ARROW! HE WILL LIVE TO HAVE HIS EVIL WAY FOR CENTURIES!

TIME WE GOT THE LEGIONNAIRES TOGETHER, SPEEDY! THIS SKULL MAY BE A HARD NUT TO CRACK!

AN URGENT MESSAGE IS FLASHED TO THE SOLDIERS OF VICTORY... WHILE WITHIN AN ABANDONED RAILROAD CAR A HELPLESS WARRIOR WATCHES HIS DOOM APPROACH!

DON'T GIVE UP SO SOON, PARDNER! I THINK I SEE A WAY OUT... BUT I MAY HAVE TO BREAK MY HEAD TO FIND IT!

IT LOOKS LIKE THE END FOR YOU, VIGILANTE! AND THEN I'LL DIE OF STARVATION! ALL BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE A HERO!

BY THROWIN' MY WEIGHT BACKWARD, FRIEND, I'LL BE ABLE TO TIP THIS CHAIR OVER!

BETTER HURRY, VIGILANTE! THAT TRIGGER IS TIGHTENING!

JUST IN TIME, VIGILANTE!

THAT BULLET SKIMMED MY HAIR! BUT MY HEAD'S IN ONE PIECE... AND THE CHAIR ISN'T!

THIS ROPE WILL GIVE WAY IN A FEW SECONDS... AND THEN I'M GOING AFTER THAT SIDEWINDER THAT CALLS HIMSELF THE SKULL!

BUT HE'S GONE, VIGILANTE! YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM!

WHILE THE WARRIOR OF THE PLAINS SEEKS TO PICK UP THE SKULL'S TRAIL ONCE MORE, HE RECEIVES A MESSAGE SUMMONING HIM TO A MEETING OF THE SEVEN SOLDIERS!

THE SKULL THINKS THAT HIS WEALTH WILL PROTECT HIM! WE'VE GOT TO SHOW HIM THAT THE POSSESSION OF MONEY DOESN'T ALLOW A MAN TO BREAK THE LAW!

RIGHT, AVENGER! AND BESIDES I'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH THAT SKUNK SLADE!

WHILE IN HIS LUXURIOUS CASTLE, THE SKULL
GLOATS OVER HIS MOST PRIZED POSSESSION...

JOHNSON HIMSELF
GOT KILLED, BUT BE-
FORE HE DIED HE SENT
ME THIS MACHINE THAT
WILL GRANT ETER-
NAL LIFE!

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS STEP IN THAT VIOLET BEAM
FOR A FEW MOMENTS AND I WILL BE YOUNG
AGAIN! AH, THERE IS NOTHING A MAN WITH
VAST WEALTH CANNOT DO!

OUTSIDE THE CASTLE, THE
SEVEN LEGIONNAIRES ADVANCE
IN THE FACE OF DEATH!

SUDDENLY, THE NOISE
OF FIERCE COMBAT
REACHES THE SKULL'S
EARS!

AH, MY MEN ARE FIGHT-
ING TO PROTECT ME!
I NEED DO NOTHING
MYSELF, FOR I CAN
GET OTHERS TO FIGHT-
LIKE MY FRIEND, HITLER!
PERHAPS, SOME DAY
I, TOO, SHALL BE
A DICTATOR!

STRIPEY, WE'LL TAKE
THE PLANE ON THE RIGHT!
THE KNIGHT CAN HANDLE
THE OTHER ONE!

BY MY HALIDOM,
THESE GIANT
WASPS ARE
TROUBLE SOME!
I SHALL HAVE TO
REMOVE THEIR STINGS!

I THINK WE'LL
REST FOR A MIN-
UTE, KID!

HEY, OUR
PLANE, CAN'T
STAND THAT EXTRA
WEIGHT! IT'S
GOING INTO
A SPIN!

THE
STAR-ROCKET RACER SWOOPS
DOWN UPON THE ENEMY PLANE!

WHILE THE SHINING
KNIGHT, SLASHING WITH
HIS MAGIC SWORD...

NOW THE HEAVENS WILL BE
FREE OF SUCH VERMINOUS
CREATURES!

HEY, BALE OUT,
EVERYBODY! WE'RE
GOING TO CRASH

WE'D BETTER LAND NOW, PARDNERS!
WE CAN'T FLY INTO THE SKULL'S
PALACE!

VICTORY CAN FLY WHEREVER
THERE IS AIR! FORWARD,
MY FRIENDS!

AS THE LEGIONNAIRES LAND, AN IRON-CLAD,
FIRE-SPITTING MONSTER COMES INTO VIEW!

OH, OH! WE DIDN'T
COUNT ON THIS!

THAT TANK IS TOO
TOUGH FOR EVEN YOUR
FISTS, AVENGER!



BUT AHEAD OF THE GALLANT CRIME-
FIGHTERS, DANGER LOOMS OMINOUSLY...

LOOKS LIKE A JOB
FOR ME AND
SPEEDY THIS TIME!

WE'LL EACH
TAKE A GUN,
GREEN ARROW!

TWO SLENDER
SHAFTS
SPEED
THROUGH
THE AIR
STRAIGHT
FOR
THEIR
MOVING
TARGETS!



THE ARROW WON'T
LET THE CARTRIDGE
BELT MOVE! THE
GUN IS JAMMED!

WE CAN FIX THAT!
PULL THE
ARROW OUT!



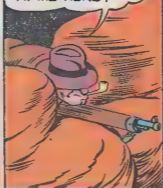
HEY,
WHAT...?

GET AWAY FROM
THAT CARTRIDGE
BELT, OR I'LL
PIN YOUR EARS
BACK!



AS THE SEVEN SOLDIERS OF
VICTORY NEAR THE SKULL'S
CASTLE, HIDDEN SNIPERS
TAKE UP THE BATTLE!

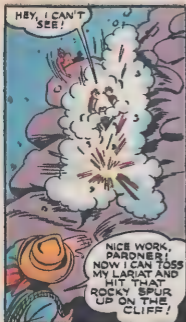
THE MINUTE THOSE
BIRDS SHOW THEM-
SELVES, I'LL PICK THEM
OFF! THEY CAN'T GET
AT ME HERE!



THIS LOOK LIKE YOUR
CHANCE, MIST' CLIMSON!

YOU'RE RIGHT, WING!
HERE GOES ONE OF
MY CRIMSON
CAPSULES!





HEY, I CAN'T SEE!

NICE WORK, PARDNER! NOW I CAN TOSS MY LARIAT AND HIT THAT ROCKY SPUR UP ON THE CLIFF!



I'LL TAKE THE FIRST ONE, AV-ENGER! THERE'S ANOTHER ONE FURTHER UP THAT YOU CAN HAVE!

ALL RIGHT WITH ME, VIGILANTE, SO LONG AS YOU DON'T KNOCK THEM BOTH OUT!



HOW DO YOU LIKE THIS FOR SHARPSHOOTIN', YOU VARMINT?

AHHHH...

WHILE FURTHER UP THE CLIFF...



OW!

OW!

JUST PRACTICING, BOYS! I'M BANGING A COUPLE OF SKULLS TOGETHER NOW SO THAT I'LL KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THE CHIEF SKULL LATER!

AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE SKULL'S PALACE ITSELF...

METHINKS THIS WEAPON, STUTTERS TOO MUCH. I AM CUTTING SHORT ITS PAINFUL SPEECH!

COME ON, STRIPESY! WE NEED A LITTLE STRONG-ARM STUFF!

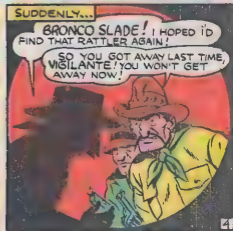


IT'S NO FUN, KID! THESE FELLOWS HAVE WEAK JAWS!

OW!

UGH!

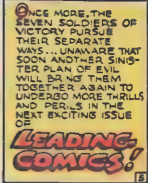
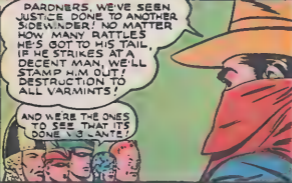
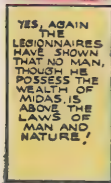
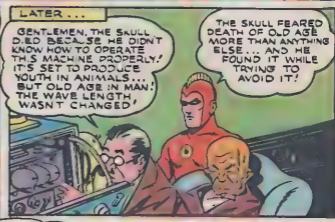
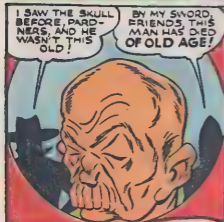
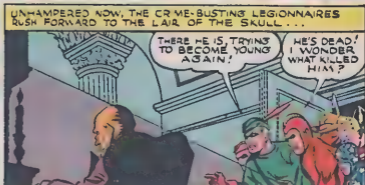
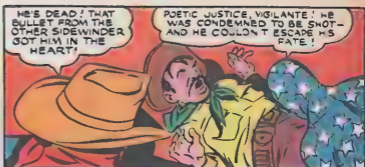
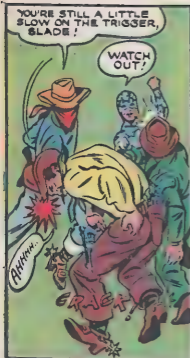
AHHHH...



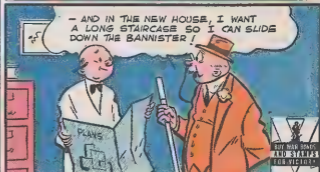
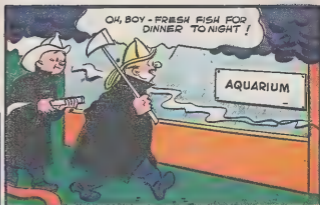
SUDDENLY...

BRONCO SLADE! I HOPED I'D FIND THAT RATTLER AGAIN!

SO YOU GOT AWAY LAST TIME, VIGILANTE! YOU WON'T GET AWAY NOW!



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BLACK PIRATE and MINUTE MOVIES!

THREE TIMES LOSER

by Eric Carter

WHEN a guy is a three times loser he has to be plenty careful. A three times loser, in gangland parlance, is like a guy who has one foot in the grave and the other on a banana peel. One little slip and you're through.

They call it the Baumes Law. It is a law with teeth, and means that if you are a four time offender, you go to jail for life.

Slick Mason did not intend to do that.

Now you would think that a hood like Slick, who has missed up three times in a row, would be very, very careful about pursuing crime further. Well, Slick was careful. From now on, he promised the boys, every job would be performed the way military men execute strategy.

Of course, a smart guy would have given up crime entirely. One little miss and you are singing the Prisoner's Song the rest of your days. Only Slick wasn't a smart guy. He was a dumb guy. And only so because he *thought* he was smart.

Take this bank job now. There couldn't be any slips, not the way Slick had planned it. He knew to the minute at what given point a watchman would pass; he knew the alarm bells; he knew where the cop who patrolled the beat would be.

"I know everything," he proudly told the two thugs, Splinter and Wedgy, who sat watching him. "except where is Barmy?"

Splinter said: "I think he went to the Doc's. Don't you remember, Boss?"

Slick Mason frowned. He should have remembered. Af-

ter all, Barmy had said something. Now what was it he was complaining about. Heart? No, Barmy had a heart as strong as his good right arm. Feet? Yeah, that must have been it. Barmy was always complaining about his feet.

Slick leaned back in his chair and reflected. Sure, it was Barmy's feet. He recalled now, how two years ago he had taken Barmy, a big good-natured clown of a fellow, into the mob. Barmy had been swiping cars in Slick's territory. He hadn't known when he grabbed a big black Cadillac that it had belonged to Slick Mason.

At first, Slick had been furious. Then he had had to laugh.

Thus the advent of Barmy into Slick Mason's high-powered organization. The four thugs had been doing well, too, this past year and Slick was feeling pretty confident that he had beaten the four times jinx.

This last job would set them on Easy Street. It had been cased for months, and every man knew what he was to do. Including Barmy.

Slick looked at his watch. There wasn't much time to lose.

A door opened.

"Well," Slick said. "It's about time."

Barmy grinned. "I couldn't help it, Slick. You know, you said I should go see the Doc."

Slick saw the other two boys looking at him. Their expressions seemed to say. "What's the matter with the Boss? If he knew where Barmy was all the time, why'd he ask us?" This nettled him.

"Okay, Barmy," he said irately. "So you been to the Doc's. And now if your dogs are okay, and your ears are

open, just listen to what you have to do."

"But Slick, don't you want to hear about those pains I was getting?"

Splinter and Wedgy tittered. They were high class box men, and, after all, Barmy was only a car thief.

"You'll get some pains," Slick warned, "if you don't get these instructions into your thick skull. You know I'm hot, and this is our last job. It's okay for you guys, but one slip for old Slick and he winds up the rest of his days in the Big House."

"Gosh, I'm sorry, Boss." Barmy was properly penitent. "But I only—"

"Shut up! Tonight, when it's dark, you pick out a new car. There's a big show on at the movies tonight, and the street will be filled with stuff. Make sure you get a new one. And another thing, Barmy. This city has a dim-out regulation now. Nothing but parking lights are to be lit. Remember that."

He turned to Splinter and Wedgy. "We're going to be working in the dark most of the time and we got to be careful." He was becoming angry. This war was getting on his nerves. "Blackouts on everything," he stormed. "How's an honest crook going to see what he's doing?"

Splinter was sympathetic. "That's right, Boss. I even had to get a special flash to work by." He pounded the table with his fist. "But we'll show the rest of the hoods in this town what a real haul is like. They'll never forget this."

Slick smiled. He had the best bunch in town. He could depend on them. "Okay, boys," he said expansively. "Spread

out. We'll meet tonight at eleven sharp."

He watched them go, a feeling of well-being suffusing him. Nobody would ever have figured on a bank robbery at eleven. But then, they didn't know Slick Mason, and how he worked.

The whole route was carefully planned. They'd pick up Barmy in the alley back of the bank. It was plenty dark enough there, and nobody would see a black car. Then, going out of town, until they hit the highway, they'd take back streets, which were plenty blacked out. "Maybe," Slick mused, "this war isn't so bad after all."

Promptly at ten-thirty, a huge, hulking fellow walked leisurely around the car-filled streets surrounding the movie palace. It was Barmy, smiling happily at Slick's strategy. "Slick sure knows his stuff," he said, glancing at the crowd still storming the theatre. They were giving away \$3,000 tonight, and there was a good picture besides. The management had called out the reserves when, at this time, the crowd showed no signs of decreasing.

He shook his head as a sharp pain knifed above his eyes. He wished Slick had listened to what the Doc had said.

Barmy marvelled. Something really was wrong with him. A big fellow like him, too. He shrugged. The pain had subsided. "Slick'll explain what it is," he told himself. "A guy like Slick is smart."

His eyes lit up suddenly. How come he had missed this car? It was a lulu. Bright and shining.

Barmy bent over, looked at the tires. Oh boy, brand new! Some big shot must own this one, he thought. Well, he could have it back later. Maybe.

In a few moments, he was spinning off. He drove the car around until one minute to

eleven. Then, with the lights extinguished, he slid into the alley behind the bank. The motor purred so beautifully it was scarcely audible. The cops would have some job if they tried to chase this job. She'd do ninety without a murmur.

He settled back onto the cushions. The boys would be working inside about now, having gotten in through barred windows weakened by acid. Slick had even found the alarm on the window. There'd be no trouble there.

Fifteen minutes later he heard the shot. It wasn't loud, but Barmy knew what it was. His ears were attuned to such noises. "Something up," he said, troubled. But he kept his place. When Slick gave orders, you didn't question them.

Another moment and the boys were there. They had the money with them. Slick slid into the seat alongside Barmy. "Get going!" he said. "Splinter had to wing the watchman."

The car moved smoothly down the street. Through the corner of his eye, Barmy saw Slick mop his brow. He knew what that meant. Slick was worried. He didn't like gun play.

"Don't worry, Boss," he said. "We'll be a few hundred miles from here by morning. This is some bus."

Slick nodded. The car was powerful, all right. Barmy had done a good job. Besides, nobody would see it in these blacked out streets or on darkened highways. That was one good thing about a black car. Further, there were so many black ones, it wouldn't be noticed in daylight traffic.

The car roared through the night. Slick and the boys cat-napped after counting the haul. It was plenty, and Slick was well satisfied.

Slick closed his eyes, and the night rolled on, soft and smooth like the limousine that was carrying them to freedom. By tomorrow night they'd have

reached the hideout and ditched the car.

Everything, Slick said happily, as he dozed off, was fine. Just a perfect Slick Mason job.

It was the wail of the siren that woke him up!

The sharp rays of the newly-risen sun hit his eyes. He looked back. "Cops!"

Yes, there were two of them, roaring along with sirens and throttles wide open. Slick reached for his gun. Splinter and Wedgy were scared, looked at him. Surprise had caused panic.

Then Slick leaned back, relaxed his grip on the gun. "Wait a minute, boys," he said. "What've we got to worry about? We can bluff this out." He knew Barmy, knew that the car's registration would be in the pocket. Barmy never took a car without making sure the registration was around. News of the theft wouldn't have reached here yet.

"Slow down, Barmy," he said. "We'll talk to 'em." He grinned.

The grin froze. "Barmy," he gasped—"Look—what did you do?"

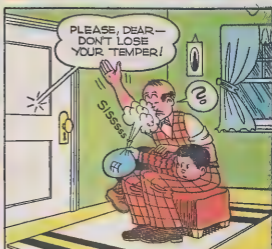
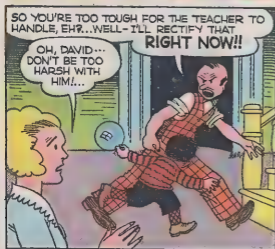
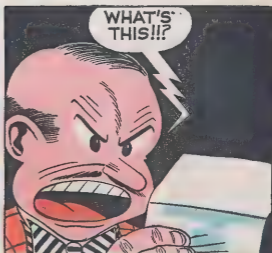
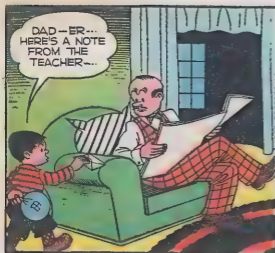
It was the first time he had seen the color of the car. Bright green. And on the hood were the initials, "P.D."

Too late then to do anything about it. Barmy had slowed down. He, too, saw the letters now. But it was too late. The troopers were alongside and their guns were drawn. And Slick, his features contorted with surprise was saying to Barmy: "A black car. I told you to get a black car. What—what—happened?"

Barmy scratched his head, with cuffed wrists. "Ain't it black, Slick?" Then suddenly, understanding came to his face.

"Slick," he said. "That eye doc I went to says I'm color blind. I wanted to ask you about that. Hey, Slick, what's the matter?"

"He's fainted," one of the troopers grinned. "I guess the shock was too much for him. Come on, boys."



DIZZY DATA

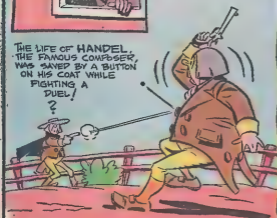
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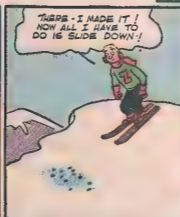


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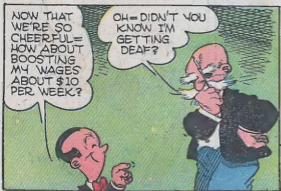
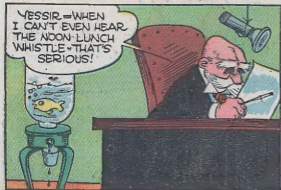
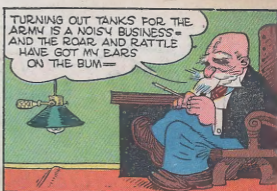
JERRY

THE JITTERBUG

WALT DISNEY



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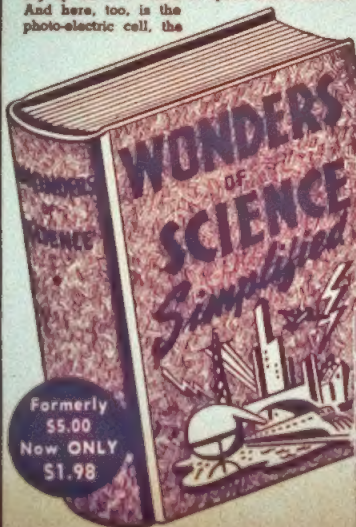
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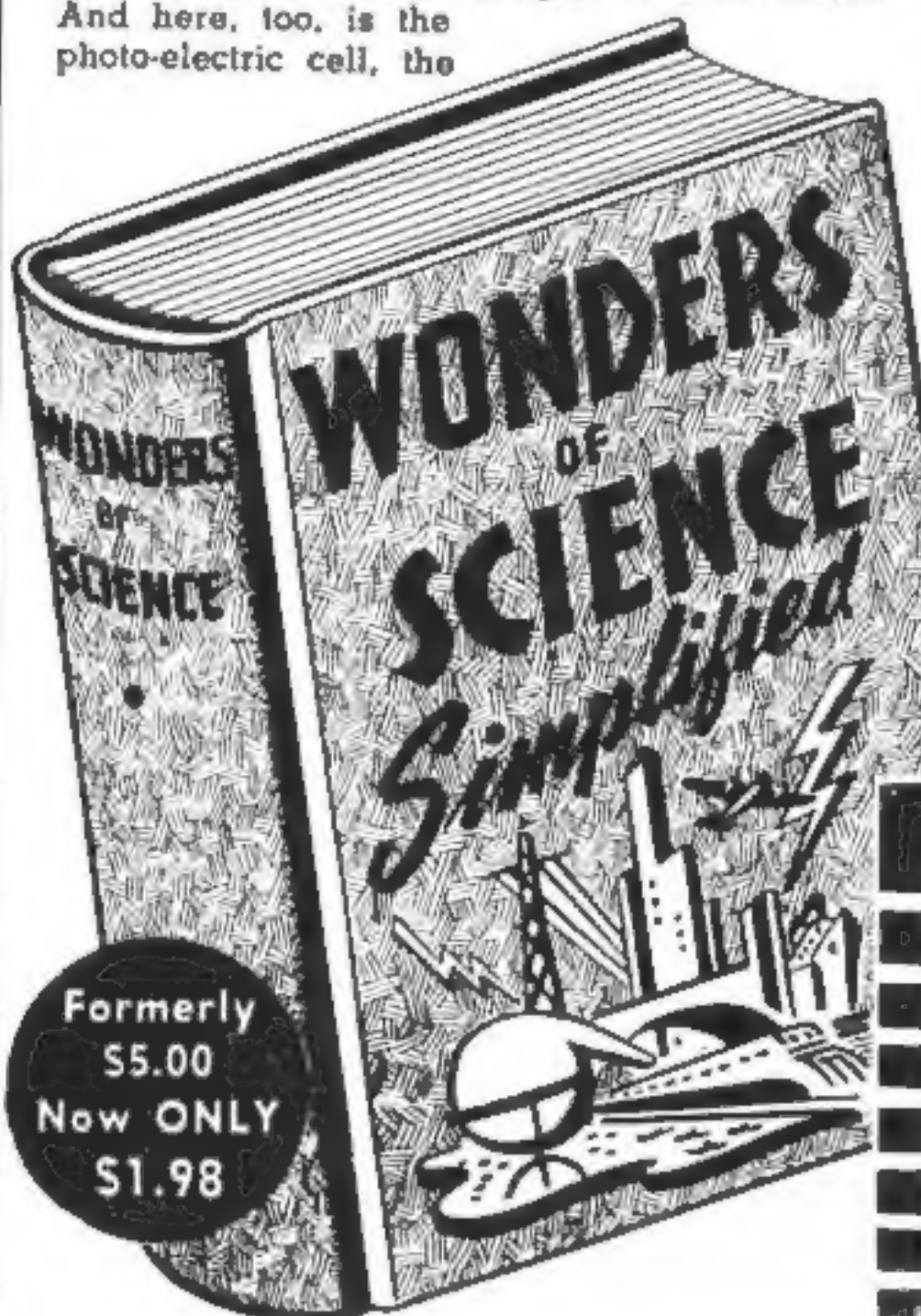
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